

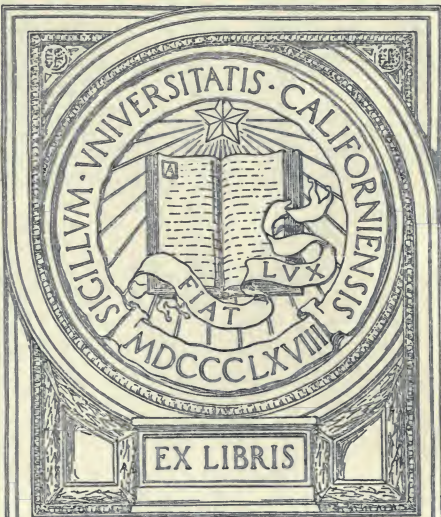
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MODERN ANTIQUITY,

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JOHN S. PRELL
Civil & Mechanical Engineer.
SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.

MODERN ANTIQUITY,

AND OTHER POEMS.

BY

THE LATE REV. C. C. COLTON,

AUTHOR OF "LACON," &c.

FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT, IN THE POSSESSION
OF MARKHAM SHERWILL.

LONDON:

B. B. KING, MONUMENT YARD;
A. H. BAILY & CO., CORNHILL.

MDCCCXXV.

JOHN A. PHELPS

Genl. & Mechanical Engineer

100 N. 3rd St. St. Louis, Mo.

MEMORANDUM

TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FROM JOHN A. PHELPS

DATE

SUBJECT

REPORT

ON

THE

STATE OF AFFAIRS

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mod
1835

PREFACE.

I most willingly admit that no poetry, having the slightest taint of mediocrity, would meet with readers in the present day; but, when we consider the following Poem, either as to its extent or its variety, or the masterly manner in which that diversity is handled, we feel assured that none who are in possession of "Lacon," or "Hypocrisy," will deem their libraries complete without the assistance of this their sister Muse.

The dying request of my much-esteemed friend, the author of "Modern Antiquity," that it should be printed after his death, involved me in a task of great difficulty. I say, it was a difficult

task imposed upon me, because he desired I would write explanatory Notes to such parts of it as I should find necessary to be relieved from an almost unavoidable obscurity. He conceived the idea that I was fully acquainted with all the matter which his master-mind has endeavoured to express on the subject now before us. But Mr. COLTON, however he might feel convinced, after an acquaintance of twenty years, of my readiness to serve him to the extent of my power, deceived himself much as to my capability for such a task, and had formed too high an opinion of that which appears but too insignificant in the execution.

A few hours previous to his death, Mr. Colton dictated the last four stanzas of "Modern Antiquity," and at the same time expressed a wish that they had been more creditable to him and to the subject: how far his apprehension was well founded is for those to decide who are fit judges and liberal critics.

That the poem would have been retouched by his powerful pen, there can be little doubt; and that he would have added to it a long train of deep thought, fitting the subject he had in view, I know to have been his intention, if pain and disease had not wholly deprived him of that "Hope and Patience" which he felt had quitted him for ever!

It may be said by some, that the object of this poem is of little worth, or that it possesses no moral: the fact of there being no moral attached to it, is certainly less reprehensible than if it inculcated a bad one. The subject had been treated on before the late Mr. Colton gave it its present splendid form, as Bacon was the first writer to dispute the validity of the claims of our forefathers to *true* antiquity; claims that have produced much that is deplorable, if not more that is absurd.

" True talent is the ray that flings
A novel light o'er common things."

In the following pages we find many of those thoughts that would have been beautiful even in their simplicity and nakedness of nature, and are certainly not less so now that they are presented in the best drapery and ornaments of art: we should be equally capable of detecting deformity, were she arrayed in costly trinkets.

In this poem we observe that the rhyme is almost invariably thrown upon the strongest word; which, however difficult to accomplish, is a rule that our poet strictly attended to.

Antithesis became a powerful engine in such skilful hands as those of our author; and in most cases we may acknowledge that it had Truth for its root, and Wit for its fairest blossom. For his images and illustrations, he had recourse to the whole material and intellectual world: his researches were deep, and he frequently chose the most obvious as the most expressive, notwithstanding the chance that they had been anticipated; while at other moments he selected

some less clear and less evident, because they were novel, although they might possess the disadvantage of being somewhat obscure.

Metaphors have been described as the algebra of language, and their use or abuse is an almost unerring test of talent: we may venture to assert that the abuse of this elegant figure is scarcely to be found in this poem; for our author was not of that class of bad poets, who, when mounted on a metaphor, generally break down or bolt.

I have heard Mr. Colton say, that, when he was writing his poem "Hypocrisy," (now out of print,) he had no books in the room in which he wrote; and it was only when he had finished that work that he examined with the originals the quotations he applied, in order to ascertain if his memory had been correct. That he wrote "Modern Antiquity" under the same circumstances, would not be difficult for me to aver. During the progress of his writing, he did not appear at a loss for those close and remote re-

semblances on which all wit and illustration depend. His memory was certainly very extraordinary and extensive: she is generally the friend of wit, though but too often the treacherous ally of invention; sometimes assuming her shape, sometimes counterfeiting her signature, and this so clumsily, that it deceives none but him alone who suspects the fraud the least, and whose credit suffers the most.

He observed to me one day, when I was speaking to him on his apparent want of books, that, if the mind be well stored, the less we have to do with books during the period of composition the better. The truth of this remark was certainly exemplified in our immortal bard, Milton, whose works lost nothing by his blindness.

Although "Modern Antiquity" was written in the winter of his life, which was somewhat rough and boisterous, Mr. Colton has shown sufficient proof that his mind retained to the last all the

freshness of spring, and all the fecundity of autumn.

Mr. Colton (as I have already stated in a former page,) was labouring under great pain, from an old and inveterate complaint, at the time he finished the present poem. During the last four-and-twenty hours of his chequered life, he expressed to me more than once great doubt as to the probability of his recovery. I may say that he entertained a fear of death, and, while apprehending that awful moment, a sudden aberration of mind called it to his relief! How strange,—that which he dreaded most, he courted as his only cure. We have witnessed moments when the best and the most learned men resigned their powers of reflection into the hands of despair, and abandoned the idea that good even may be inculcated by an example of courage and resignation. The insufferable agony with which Mr. Colton was afflicted, seemed at once to dethrone his reason, and render him the victim of

derangement.* Let us hope, in consideration of his respectable and extensive connexions, that a pall will be drawn over those deviations which humanity is subject to. That the good which he may have done should not be evil spoken of, it is but just that we should here state how invariably cautious he was of respect towards every hallowed subject; frequent in alleviating the miseries of others, even when in affliction himself; and last-

* It may be presumed that suicide will unhappily become more frequent as civilization and its improvements advance, as it proceeds from causes that such a state contributes very much to create and multiply. There are eloquent though silent actors, that but too often succeed in tempting us from our right path: they are to be found in this our age, which has been termed an age of refinement; and, if they do exist elsewhere, they have not attained a sufficient influence to produce any fatal results; for we hear of few instances of suicide among rude and barbarous tribes: ready to destroy one another, they rarely lift the murderous hand against themselves.

ing will be the benefits of his aphorisms to the studious and contemplative, and which, if carefully gleaned, must still the voice of the enemy and avenger, forcing even such to tread lightly over the ashes of his untimely grave.

It was erroneously stated, at the moment of Mr. Colton's death, that he was in a state bordering on poverty: such was not the truth. He had been for a long time substantially assisted by his family, which is confirmed by a letter he wrote to his aged mother only a few days before the awful moment of his decease, in which he thanked her for her ample remittances.

We have spoken of Mr. Colton's high respect towards every hallowed subject. In his frequent and unrestrained conversations with me on the possibility of a future state of immortality, his opinions and conclusions always tended to this one great truth, that "this world cannot explain its difficulties without the assistance of another." He would strongly urge the necessity of a ge-

neral acceptation of the Christian doctrines, as the safe side: "they are," said he, "the only thing that can give permanent consistency to virtue, or appal vice with apprehension and alarm; they give solidity to our happiness, and are a solace to our minds. A belief in a future state," continued he, "is necessary to the well-being of society: without that belief, an oath, in many instances our sole guide to truth, becomes an empty sound."

I asked him, one day, what he considered the strongest proof in favour of Revelation: he replied, "The History of the Life of Christ, particularly as exhibited in the Gospels, and the morality adducible from it: they are so pure and perfect, so salutary to our nature, so suitable to our condition, that they are in every respect worthy of that high source from whence they are supposed to emanate." "The Life of Christ," he continued, "was so perfect, that, without an original, the copy could not have been drawn:

the corruption introduced by men into the practice of Christianity is no argument against the purity of Christianity itself."

Such were the general opinions and convictions of the Author of "Lacon," expressed in unreserved conversations with me on these highly interesting and most important subjects.

By the sudden death of Mr. Colton we shall be deprived of a great literary feast, inasmuch as the Memoirs of his own Life, extraordinary and singular as it was, remain unfinished. The outline of this work promised much: it was richly adorned with the characters of the most leading men of his time and of the age; the Notes indicate a great variety of matter and anecdote, which it was his intention to throw into them, in the shape of opinion of men, with a review of their public conduct and literary productions, finely worked up with that acute language and satire which marked his writings and conversation. Writing was to Mr. Colton an intellectual

pleasure of such a magnitude, that latterly he sought no other; and his nights were dedicated to this recreation rather than to sleep. The materials with which his mind was so well stored, could never cloy or remain idle: far from deteriorating his mental powers, the constant exercise of those materials seemed only to invigorate.

In one of the Notes connected with his own Memoirs, he says, "I for one would rejoice to live my life over again to please myself, but certainly should think it hard to be obliged to do so to please others." But, alas! we have seen by this short sketch, that there exists a paradox but too common to humanity; which is, that those live who wish to die, and those die that have the greatest desire to live.

Mr. Colton complained to me lately of the failure of his eyesight: even from this circumstance he would draw a conclusion that would not occur to every one: "It is a warning," said he, "to shut up all books, to study our own

character, that we may amend, and benefit by those former readings that were, or ought to have been, the occupation of our youth and manhood.

I have already said that, in the sketches among Mr. Colton's papers intended for his memoirs, the career of many worldly men is finely traced; but it must not be understood that they are written with disgusted misanthropic disappointment, or with the querulous debility of old age: he considered the arrangement of these memoirs as a recreation, a reaction to be attempted at less cost; and not more a matter of amusement to himself, than they certainly would have been, like many of his former works, of great profit and advantage to the reader.

The best recompense that a man can offer to posterity, who has passed through a long and an eccentric life, certainly would be to offer a life well written. Examples, otherwise pernicious, may thus be converted into warnings, and our

defects may teach others to conquer. What little skill or prudence we may have evinced may be rendered more beneficial to others, by candidly examining the how, the when, and the where; and, should our wisdom or our sagacity not have accomplished all that might have been done, what they have accomplished may have been for a moment tarnished by an intoxication of success.

MARKHAM SHERWILL.

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MODERN ANTIQUITY.

“ Ea enim pro verâ antiquitate habenda est, quæ temporibus nostris tribui debet, non juniori ætati mundi qualis apud antiquos fuit.”

LORD BACON.

THE sun is old, as may be known
From spots around his brightness thrown;
The sea is old, as still appears,
Whene'er his hoary head he rears ;

And earth, that hath for ages spun
Her giddy circle round the sun,
Must burn, or beg the Polar Bear
To cool her axle, scorched with wear :

The stars, to music of the spheres
Their twinkling feet and listening ears
Have lent so long, that some the dance
Have quitted,¹ for a welcome trance.

So old and ancient are the hills,
Their date a musty proverb fills ;
And all the fire that warmed their breast,
By frost of ages is suppressed ;²

The rivers are so far from youth,
They 've worn both rock and pebble smooth ;
And some, with pioneering wave,
Have dug their own gigantic grave.

But Thou³ that o'er th' Egyptian hurled
Thy crystal wall, and didst a world
Both made and marred record, Oh, deign to tell,
Seer of the pillared flame, and granite well!—

Who taught old Mother Earth to hide
The lava's age-repeated tide,
And bid,—though centuries toiled in vain,
Her thousandth Eden bloom again ?

Or solve what æras, since the shock
Of flood and flame, rived hill and rock,
Have rolled—to turn to flint and stone
The Bison's horn—the Mammoth's bone!

Imbedded deep and dark they lie,
'Neath mountains heaped on mountains high;
So *long*, their very race is spent,
They exist but in their monument ;

But who their mausoleum made?
Did earthquakes wield that mighty spade
That renders all *thy* Babel piled
But the card-castle of a child ?

Strange! that Creation can't afford
Such pomp to shroud her sixth-day's Lord,
But gives each mean or monstrous thing
That burial—she denies her king!

These are Earth's secrets—but to gain
Those of that Deep *thou* rent in twain,
'Twere worth a dull eternity
Of common life—to question thee.

Call to thy council, all the scribes
That Israel trained in all her tribes,
Canst thou, or they, by scale or line
Of Matter,—Measure,—Weight,—define?

What giant⁴ reared those isles that brave
With coral brow the southern wave,
A world reconquered from *her foe*,
And conquering still, doomed still to grow.

Thy Noah saw one world destroyed,
His sons are better far employed ;
They build an ark—their father's trade—
To find out worlds already made ;

Compared to which, the works of man,
Till but an atom, last a span ;
Though Archimedes the compass bent,
And Chæops all his myriads lent !

View, sons of Egypt, Rome, and Greece,
What Time can't mar, but must increase ;
Your rules remodel, and reform,
And seek your master—in a worm !

Canst find a plummet more profound
Than these immortal builders—sound
Dire fathoms deep, and then detect
A grub—the mighty Architect !

Proud cities! hives of prouder men,
What are ye now?—th' Hyæna's den;—
With hoof unshod the Zebra bounds
O'er prone Palmyra's mouldering mounds.

Who laid your shroud of sable on,
O Tadmor, Thebes, and Babylon!—
Then left, your spectred forms to deck,
Nought but the ruin of the wreck?

But Time himself is aged grown,—
His teeth are gone with crushing stone;
His might to mow his scythe forbids,—
'Twas shattered on the Pyramids.

Then we, that on these days are thrown,
Must be the oldest Ancients known:
The *earliest*, modern Earth hath seen,
Was Adam,—in his apron green.

He lived when young Creation pealed
Her morning hymn o'er flood and field,
Till all her infant offspring came
To that great christening for a name.

While Earth, a virgin then, repaid
His gentle toil without a spade ;
And, decked in flowrets, dared the plough
To trace a wrinkle on her brow.

Then in his teens, a stripling blithe,
Time worked his wing, but not his scythe,
His leisure, pleasure—his employ
To ripen beauty—not destroy.

Unyoked by science to the sail,
Young zephyrs sported in the gale,
Or wantoned with the jocund wave,—
A truant then, but since a slave.

The youthful Sun, with bridal smile,
Kissed ocean—continent—and isle ;
No Joshua curbed, no comet quailed,
No dim eclipse his glory veiled.

Then he that would the Ancients know,
Must forward come, not backward go ;
The learned lumber of the shelves
Shows nothing older than ourselves.

Yet Prejudice discovers true
Antiquity, where all his new ;
And more perversely still doth hold
That all is new—where all is old.

Prescribing, with dogmatic pen,
Her milk of babes, as meat to men ;
Nor kens the river's mighty bed,
Still poring o'er the fountain-head.

But who in older times than we
Shall live?—That infant on the knee,⁵—
See sights to us were never shown,
And secrets know—to us unknown.

He on that 'vantage-ground shall stand,
That must far nobler views command;
By each successive hand or head,
With grandeur clothed or verdure fed.

Each buried sage might beg the boy
To read a lecture on his toy,⁶—
On principles profounder planned
Than Boyle divined, or Bacon scanned;

And, ere his lip with down be spread,
He might instruct their hoary head—
Till, wrapp'd in wonder, o'er his tongue
The pensive shade of Newton hung.

For man alone—of all that lives
In ocean, earth, or air—derives
Light from his fellows⁷—Man alone,
By tracing backward, marches on :

O'er all that has been retrospects,
And hence on all that is—reflects ;
And where success or failure steers,
A beacon—or a Pharos rears.

Keen to one point, beyond it blind,
Could Instinct *here* compete with Mind,
Some change had marked the spider's loom,
Bee's fragrant cell, or beaver's room :

Then might yon ape be taught to swell
And feed the flame, he loves so well ;⁸
Or India's ant to shun the bank
Where all his van by millions sank.⁹

For Instinct is as one that sees
The hour-hand trace its slow degrees,
But ne'er can tell the time of day
By such a circumscribed survey ;

But Man his firm foundation lays
On past experience, and surveys
His Sons—progressing in their might—
Like Time—through darkness as through light :¹⁰

Through darkness—with man's nonage blent,
When each unconquered element,
Not hope, but havoc did afford—
By turns man's tyrant or his lord.

Through light—when ray with ray combined,
Collects, by mind propelling mind,
From all earth, air, or ocean yield,
Safety or strength—a sword or shield.

By time deciduous, scooped by worms,¹¹
Docked in ravines, and launched by storms,
The bark, that sculked from nook to nook,
And feared a wreck in every brook,

Bore in her rotten womb the plan
That changed the destinies of man,—
Dominion gave,—and bid him roll
The Thunderer's peal from Pole to Pole.

Wedded the Nations, joined their hands,
Their goods, their chattels, and their lands,
Made all that's viewed from Andes' ridge
No more a *barrier*, but a *bridge*!

Transplanted half that Anak brood
That Earth o'ershadows, to the flood,
And forests launched, but bend before
That blast—had levelled them on shore.

But whether art, by entreaty 'guiled,
With phantom-forms amuse the child,
Or bid her tube Protean—ope
Thy fairy freaks, Kaleidoscope;

Or, soaring view from silken ball
The ¹²Condor's watery double wall;
Or dive with Davy's net, to tame—
As Vulcan, Mars—the fettered flame :

Yet still with *her!* what's meanest tends
Full oft to mightiest, loftiest ends,
Bids Newton's apple, Franklin's kite,
Give laws to Lightning and to Light.

The hoary Sage,¹³ that first did raise,
Slow steaming from his faggot's blaze,
The subtle Vapour,—instant hailed
Alcides, in his cradle veiled;

Reason and Force, too oft opposed,
For once their hands resistless closed,
Combined to rear, and pledged their troth,
This full epitome of both.

Then, limb by limb—the giant rose,
A Sampson—e'en in swaddling clothes ;
Matured—he changed Earth's form and face,
And half subjected time and space ;

Pierced through the mountain's bowels deep,
Where sunless, countless treasures sleep,
And, like a Nero, ripped the womb
From whence his iron sinews come ;

The cost of all his outfit, told
And summed,—he paid a thousand fold ;
And where the barren desert frowned,
The ransom of a Cræsus found.

Thy hundred arms, O Briareus,
To match with his, 'twere little use,—
His flail to dust thy bones would grind,
His winnow blow them to the wind.

Command his speed, and quick elope,
And double distance th' antelope;¹⁴
Or dare him, and the race he'll win
From all that feather hath, or fin;

Or task his strength, and straight embark
With all that lumbered Noah's ark;
Then mast-less, sail-less, oar-less ride
Triumphant against wind and tide;¹⁵

Yet can those giant fingers ply
The spindle for *his* Omphaly,
Her cestus weave and broidered zone,
Mould all her trinkets one by one.

Her mirror form, her tresses fold
In microscopic mesh of gold;
Or spread the gossamer to shroud
Her beauties—as the moon—a cloud.

Though prompt to pile, if needs be done,
A pyramid, by set of sun,¹⁶
Or mountains move, might gall a train
Of harnessed elephants in vain;

Wouldst fit him for the field, proclaim
All former strife a truant's game,
'Tis war no longer—but a wreck
Of helmed head, and bridled neck :

Not spoil, but havoc—none are ta'en—
Not rout, but ruin—all remain,
That fought—but not a tongue to tell
The fate that all alike befel!—

Still foot by foot, and year by year,
This giant gains in growth and gear,
But what he *shall* be, none can say
But those that bide the Judgment-day;

Or wait some deluge thundering forth
His hundredth ploughshare o'er the earth;
Then those might boast, that chance survived,
They invented *that*, they but revived.

But Time, nor rhyme, can tell the throes—
As perfect from imperfect rose—
Of minds that writhed in Error's yoke,
Ere from Art's acorn burst her oak.¹⁷

Long was the labour, tough the toil,
Ceaseless the conflict and turmoil
Of those, that PREJUDICE¹⁸ that old
Antæus braved, and half controlled

As Cacus brutes—he fetters men,
And drags them *backwards* to his den,
Puts out their eyes, then bids them go
And guide their brethren—that have two:

Then 'tis his wont—when sorely pressed,
To rouse some *buried* name from rest,
His prowess vaunt, expose his head,
And scare the living with the dead.

He crotchets had, and many a whim,
But who denied them—woe to him,—
He'd lash or lecture,—many thought
'Twas better to be flogged than taught.

He did maintain 'twas not the blade
But scabbard that the faulchion made,
And that the merits of a steed
Lay in his trappings, not his speed.

He swore no living mortal, yet,
E'er got beyond his Alphabet;—
Termed cities nought but Riot's schools,
The masters dead—the scholars fools:

He said, the seed that held the tree
Must, of the two, the greater be;
And that the Nile, at fountain-head,
Was mightier far than in his bed:

He held a feast, and there and then
Served meat to babes, and milk to men,
And swore 'twas proper, will or nill,
And crammed it down with club or quill.

An old decrepit dwarf he kept,
That never talked but when he *slept*,
This was his oracle, he'd note
All these his babblings down, and *quote*:

He sunk a well, at vast expence
Of time and cost, and drew from thence
Some muddy water,—this he swore
Exceeded the —— river at his door!

He dubbed the faggots from *his* wood
The best logicians since the flood,
That threw more light on things unknown
Than e'en from truth or reason shone;

Strong slaves he had, and not a few,
But how to rule them never knew,
Their rebel hands but ruin spread,
And sometimes broke their master's head;

He brought a parrot up, to speak
All languages, and whistle Greek;
What pleased him most, when all was done,
Was this—He could talk sense in none;

He trained an elephant, with skill,
His *teapot* night and morn to fill,
At length the beast, from sheer excess
Of food, succumbed, and idleness;

He had a guide¹⁹ that knew the way
O'er all his grounds, by night or day;
But him he kept in *durance close*,
At cost of his own shins and nose.

These freaks of his, to some may seem
Irrelevant unto my theme,
But those who through the surface pierce,
Will see the Moral of my verse:

His neighbours, these vagaries sad
Had watched, and deemed him daft, or mad,
Albeit he sometimes *dealt* a hint
That had a world of method in 't;

At length they mustered all their power
To force his keep, and storm his tower,
And hand him, bound, by hook or crook,
Over to Bedlam,—or St. Luke;

If 'twas a task his cave to force,
To clear and cleanse it was a worse;
Its age—augmented trash to rout,
Had worn th' Augæan besom out;

For Prejudice had been, in truth,
An antiquarian from his youth,
And any rubbish,—so 'twas old,
To his chaotic hoard he rolled;

He dragged the mile-stone from its bed
That Ajax hurled at Hector's head,
On which was graved, what must destroy
All cavil—"SEVEN MILES FROM TROY!"²⁰

Here pile on pile, embattled stood,
All reading, none could read or would;
Huge folios ranged, but not for show!
With these he levelled many a foe.

Systems, by others or *themselves*
O'erthrown, all settled on his shelves,
Nor one,—so 'twas exploded,—lacked,
But, chose them, like old China, *cracked*;

Flawed astronomic cycles, charts
From Tycho, Ptolemy, Descartes,
Old armour too that buckled on
'Twas vain alike to fight or run!

With lantern of Diogenes,
And slipper of Empedocles,²¹
And self-same ink-horn, and ink too!
That Martin at the Devil threw;²²

He showed the very shoes that shod
The Giant-race before the flood,
And “*clouted*” too, yet would they suit
And tightly fit a common foot!

The bones of martyrs he’d parade,
A second army might have made,
And if a head, or heart—or so,
Was scant—’twas even—some had two!!

But most he prized th’ identic hat
Of him who proved a *ball* was *flat*;
And a huge jack, his mightiest feat,
That made the *grate* turn,—not the meat!

He had a tube that spied out *true*
Antiquity, where all was new;
Reversed, it as correctly told
That all is new, where all is old.

And an old almanack to show
Who live the longest, youngest grow,
And that the world, as *here* displayed,
Was *oldest*, when it first was made!²³

Think of their toil, that did embark
To force and cleanse this second ark,
While "many a rude repeated stroke"
Of sledge and axe the portal broke;

But Prejudice—who hated nought
So much as Innovation,—fought
Most manfully to keep aloof
These rough reformers from his roof:

Some then he mangled, some he slew,
And others to the fire he threw,
And some He took, these made a boast,
He'd try them all—but first would roast:

But finding that the fight grew warm,
He had recourse to spell and charm ;
More imps and goblins summoned he
Than e'er beleagured Anthony.

But, once an entrance gained, they found
Much more to frighten, than to wound,
And clouds of fancied enemies
Turned out but *dust* to *blind their eyes*.

At length in his own Donjon penned,
He thought it time to call a friend!—
Skilled to divide, distract, or make
His foes their very selves mistake;

The despot Doubt,²⁴—that some hath taught
They're not of bone or body wrought:²⁵
And others in a trance control,
From which they wake without a soul!

DOUBT!—Anarch old—that staggers all²⁶—
The mighty vulgar as the small,
Claims from all hearts th' allegiance won,
Yet *satisfaction* gives to none;

And still resisted, still must reign,
Dreaded—abhorred—reviled in vain,
Sole tyrant he, that still must thrive,
While any of his subjects live!

The stoutest arm he fastest binds,
Still strongest in the strongest minds;
Who struggles hardest, suffers worst,
And tightens bands he cannot burst.

Doubt to his loathed embraces woos
One goddess—that would fain refuse;
HOPE—fairest daughter of the skies,
She—*with* Him droops—*without* Him dies;

Fear is his mistress,—she in sooth
Flies not, but *seeks* him, nothing loth,
His converse courts, by bed or board,
And loves more than *herself*, her lord :

Their union teemed *one* monster grim,
More false than her—more fell than him—
SUSPENSE,—that blends our double dread,
His Mother's heart—his Father's head !

Like Hannibal with Rome,—from youth
Doubt sneers eternal war with Truth,
Till with *one* voice, both Truth and Time,
O'er Doubt and Death their Pæan chime ;

But till that hour arrive—he tries
To whisper down these enemies,
And hints 'twere better trust a spark,
Than risk their rendering all things dark ;

Thus—those reversioners that inspire
A Wilson's zeal,—a Sydney's fire,
Doubt would—but Faith forbids—destroy,
And cancel the security:

For Wisdom *would* with Virtue wed,
And e'en on *earth* their nuptial bed
Might Angels bless,—and Heaven their hands
Unite!—but Doubt forbids the banns;

Shows just enough of future ill
To make us pause—but not stand still,
And just enough of future grace
To make us start—not *run* the race!

But HE that made the struggle hard,
Hath heightened also the reward;
Th' *uncertain* haven, and the storm,
'Tis these—a Palinurus form!

Doubt most dreads Truth, and right before
Her portal stands, and bolts the door;
Her *choicest* treasures too hath he
Locked up—*but cannot find the key;*

For nought illumes his tower or wall,
Let him that scales them heed a fall,
Or take a *torch*, for scarce a spark
Hath he,—nor fights—but in the dark;

Shrouded in night,—the random blows,
He deals alike on friends and foes,
Had made the one-eyed Cyclops shun,
This mightier giant, that hath *none!*

Would'st bind this Sampson sleeping?—He
Alas is sure to wake with thee!
One foe can foil him—but beware—
Nor seek that dread ally—Despair!

Doubt's castle on Conjecture's sea,—
Stable from instability,—
Rides,—lashed to moorings more profound
Than art can solve—or wisdom sound;

Yet hath it weathered many a gale,
Hath made the loftiest structures quail,
By master-builders proudly planned,
To stand awhile; then sink in sand;

Whether by craft Chaldean, thrown
O'er Memnon's head, and Dendrah's zone,
Or marble dome, or ruin wild,
By Phidias carved, or Druid piled:

O ye! that followed long the torch
That beamed from stoa, grove, or porch,
O mourn with me! their lamps puffed out,
And one by one—by breath of Doubt:

His household troops, that neutral ground
Command, 'twixt light and darkness, found
A space strown thick, and wide, and far,
With wrecks and ruins of the war!

Few pierce this limbo-land of cloud,
But doff their armour for their shroud,
And leave—to cheer their comrades on—
Their trophies—and their skeleton!

Yet inroads on this gloomy realm,
That mists and shadows overwhelm,
Are made,—for all that Truth would hail,
Must force this frontier line, or fail;

And through *this* Vestibule have passed
All master-minds—the first, as last,
And inch by inch, and day by day,
Have cut their road, or fought their way;

Yet good from evil may be wrought:
✓ Who never doubted—never thought;
The battle brightens,—but the truce
Rusts out the blade—for want of use;

Who thinks as others, and agrees
With all, finds nought, and little sees;
Did all accord, then all might stand
Stock-still, and darkness drown the land!

“ Complacent dullness,” witnessed long
All men *agreed*—but all men *wrong*,
No Discord jarred her gentle rule,
Nor ruffled Error’s stagnant pool;

E’en Luther, harnessed out by Truth,
Proud Leo fought, or Henry, both;
Or he *the Wizard deemed*,—allied
His Talisman to reason’s side;

Their thunder pealed o'er papal Rome,
Braved her anathemas, her gloom
Dispelled, and struck her conclave mute,
Trembling to threaten, or refute!

True talent is the ray that flings
A novel light o'er common things;
And those that dead most followers boast,
Alive—with others differed most;

Think with the crowd, and present blame
Thou shalt escape, and future fame,
And live at ease,—but vainly sigh
For Harvey's immortality!

Columbus differed,—but he found
The prize his mighty mission crowned,
And bid a new world rise, t' unfold
The rooted errors of the old!

But tell Val d'Arno!—Fiesole!—
Your starry pilgrim's destiny;
What was *your* Galileo's life?
For truth a race,—with Doubt a strife!

Alike decried, alike deplored,
Alive rejected, dead adored;
The *first* did galling fetters bind,
The *second* in a dungeon pined!

But think not *such*, their fate bewailed,
When friendship frowned, or fortune failed,
Or life!—Death but ensured their prize,
As night hides earth t' unveil the skies!²⁷

True fame's a plant that seems to need
A body *buried*—for its seed;
And ere the churlish sucklings thrive,
The parent-stock must cease to live!

The good, the great, the wise, the just,
Are little valued till they 're dust,
Nor till they mutter "Earth to earth,"
Can men perceive another's worth!

To find and count his merits o'er
The noisome cell of Death explore,
Thus Indians search, so travellers tell,
For finest pearls—the putrid shell!²⁸

Thus great or little, old or new,
Doubtful or certain, false or true;
Discordant else, all aid my rhyme,
Prove time by truth, and truth by time.

Who lived the longest—he but staid
To witness the foundation laid,
Or he that outlived Solomon
And saw that seventh wonder done

And science ere her wing was grown,
Like eaglet, from his craggy throne
Delayed,—for strength by trial won,—
Her flight adventurous to the sun.

Wisdom alone, refreshed by time,
Still marches onward to her prime,
Doomed, like the lines²⁹ herself can teach,
To approach it never—never reach.

Who lived before us did in truth
See Wisdom's *childhood*;—we, her youth;
But men—nor days, unborn, untold,
Shall ever witness Wisdom old!

Time's light, and depth, and breadth, and length,
Add force to force, and strength to strength,
To that alone that cannot die,
Nor even touch maturity.

Then let not error's pedant head
Subject the living to the dead;
But break her old inverted rule,
That sent the master back to school.

Replant the tree of knowledge, thrown
By book-winked bigots upside down;
And bury what they ate—the roots,
And what they buried, eat,—the fruits.

Till universal Truth shall gain
Her empyrean, Doubt must reign;
O then let Truth the centre be,
The circle, Unanimity!

NOTES
TO MODERN ANTIQUITY.

*Note*¹, page 2.

“The stars, to music of the spheres
Their twinkling feet and listening ears
Have lent so long, that some the dance
Have quitted, for a welcome trance.”

Lost stars, as, for instance, in the Pleiades and the tail
of the Ram.

*Note*², page 2.

“So old and ancient are the hills,
Their date a musty proverb fills;
And all the fire that warmed their breast,
By frost of ages is suppressed.”

The tops of many mountains bear signs of having once
been volcanoes, now extinct.

*Note*³, page 2.

“But Thou that o’er th’ Egyptian hurled
 Thy crystal wall, and didst a world
 Both made and marred record, Oh, deign to tell,
 Seer of the pillared flame, and granite well!—”

The questions addressed to Moses in this and the following stanzas, are beautifully poetical, and hint, as our author very justly observes, at some of “Earth’s secrets:” while to question “the seer of the pillared flame” on other facts, “were worth a dull eternity.”

*Note*⁴, page 4.

“What giant reared those isles that brave
 With coral brow the southern wave.”

The *giant* that formed and still continues to increase the Isle of France and other islands in “*the southern wave*,” is the small zoophite insect that inhabits the coral reefs. This pigmy architect, like his brother fish, the madreporé, (the original builder of the islands of Malta and of Gozo,) commences at the bottom of the sea, the

foundation of the embryo isle, and continues through ages to augment the testaceous fabric, until at length it reaches above the waves, and presents a resting-place for birds: in process of time these newly erected points become solid, and some enterprising navigator designates them as newly discovered islands. Should not the gigantic labours of these insects humble the arrogance of haughty man? and should not the reflections called forth by such mighty wonders make the atheist to adore the Creator of all?

“ Your rules remodel and reform,
And seek your master in a worm.”

Note 5, page 9.

“ But who in older times than we
Shall live?—That infant on the knee,—
See sights to us were never shown,
And secrets know—to us unknown.”

The debt of respect and reverence entailed upon us by the efforts of those who lived before us, is a just debt; but this debt has been consigned to some who, in their zeal for their clients, would gladly foreclose the mortgage, and seize on the estate. It might with safety be affirmed, that

science is at this moment in such a state of rapid progression, that the tyro of the next century will be competent to instruct the ablest proficient of the present, in some of the most important secrets in "rerum natura," could the hoary scholar be brought up to take the benefit of the acquirements of his juvenile preceptor.

Note ⁶, *page* 9.

“ Each buried sage might beg the boy
To read a lecture on his toy,—
On principles profounder planned
Than Boyle divined, or Bacon scanned.”

We must, of course, read this line to refer to far more noble discoveries than the mere whipping a top, or flying a kite. It is, perhaps, unfortunate that many of the later discoveries will have a tendency of a destructive, rather than of a salutary nature; and it is not on all occasions that philosophy, like the safety-lamp, while she gives light, prevents the conflagration.

Note 7, page 10.

“ For man alone,—of all that lives
In ocean, earth, or air,—derives
Light from his fellows;—Man alone,
By tracing backward, marches on.”

Buffon, in his introduction to the history and general character of Parrots, has written much on the power of imitation in birds and animals, and, after explaining the two distinct sorts of imitation, says, “ Nous n'apprendrons jamais aux animaux à se perfectionner d'eux-mêmes. Chaque individu peut emprunter de nous sans que l'espèce en profite : aucun ne peut communiquer aux autres ce qu'il a reçu de nous.”

Note 8, page 10.

“ Then might yon ape be taught to swell
And feed the flame, he loves so well.”

It is a well-known fact, that a monkey will sit by a fire, rub his hands, and warm himself with great delight; but he was never yet known to “feed the flame,” by adding any kind of fuel to the dying embers.

Note ⁹, *page* 10.

“ Or India’s ant to shun the bank
Where all his van by millions sank.”

Travellers have observed, particularly in America, where the ants are in much greater quantities than in Europe, that the destruction of millions of their tribes in the rapid rivers of that country, is no warning to those that follow the same track, of the certain fate that awaits them. They arrive at the bank, and such is their instinct, unaided by reflection, that they seek to follow those gone before: their certain destruction is another clear proof that instinct is

“ Keen to one point ; beyond it, blind.”

Note ¹⁰, *page* 11.

“ But Man his firm foundation lays
On past experience, and surveys
His Sons—progressing in their might—
Like Time—through darkness as through light.”

The march of knowledge, like the march of time, progresses in the darkness, no less than in the light; antece-

dent ignorance has mainly contributed to present advancement: the very errors of those that lived before us, like buoys anchored on shoals, have warned us what to avoid, while their efforts at discovery have also taught us, like beacons, what to pursue.

Note ¹¹, page 12.

“ By time deciduous, scooped by worms,
Docked in ravines, and launched by storms,
The bark, that sculked from nook to nook,
And feared a wreck in every brook.”

Boats, similar to the chance-formed canoes here spoken of by the author, and of which worms are the unconscious artists, are to this day used in the narrow rivers and streams in Greece, and are called by the natives “*Monoxolos*,” signifying a boat formed of a single piece of wood.

*Note*¹², page 13.

“Or, soaring, view from silken ball
The Condor’s watery double wall.”

The Condor is, I believe, the largest of the vulture tribe, and inhabits chiefly the lofty mountains of Peru, whose height is about twenty thousand feet. The “silken ball,” or air-balloon, has surpassed this elevation, from which the adventurous traveller might see the two oceans, which our author designates under the title of “The Condor’s watery double wall.”

*Note*¹³, page 13.

“The hoary Sage, that first did raise,
Slow steaming from his faggot’s blaze,
The subtle Vapour,—instant hailed
Alcides, in his cradle veiled.”

The venerable person here alluded to is Edward Somerset, Marquis of Worcester, whose political history during the reign of Charles the Second is too well known to be alluded to in this note; we shall therefore confine ourselves to that part of his life which relates to his philo-

sophical experiments and discoveries. The Encyclopædia edited by Dr. Rees, Dr. John Robison of Edinburgh, Dr. T. Young, and other celebrated writers on the subject of mechanical philosophy, have one and all attributed to the Marquis of Worcester the invention of the application of steam, as the *primum mobile* of the wonderful machines now existing. "The Scantling of One Hundred Inventions," perhaps better known by the title of "The Century of Inventions," written by this "hoary Sage," appeared in 1663. In his 68th invention, he speaks of the discovery *he had made*, of which he received the first idea while he was a prisoner in the Tower of London, after his return from France, to which country he had escaped from Ireland. Is it not possible, nay probable, that the Marquis, during his stay in France, had seen the *second* edition of the works of Salomon de Caus, printed there at that period; and that he retained some notion of the various experiments mentioned by De Caus as connected with a steam apparatus, that he had invented some time previous to 1663, the date of the publication of the "Century of Inventions," printed, as we before stated, by the Marquis of Worcester?

Without positively fixing the period of the discovery of the power of steam to the lifetime of Heron of Alexandria, who lived about 120 years before the birth of our Saviour,

we will come at once to a much later period ; and must certainly admit that the power of steam was known in Spain 150 years before the invention of the Marquis in the Tower of London.

Blasco de Garay, a captain in the Spanish navy, in 1543, applied the power of steam to a vessel of two hundred tons, and proved to a large concourse of persons with what facility a ship could be moved, *backwards and forwards*, by these means only, without the aid of winds, oars, or tides. This experiment was made, and repeated by order of Charles the Fifth, before an assembly of learned men ; and so completely satisfied were the persons appointed to investigate this new discovery and important secret, that the Emperor conferred a pension and other favours on Blasco de Garay, as appears by records kept at Simancas, in Catalonia, and which bear date " Barcelona, 17 June, 1543." Thus we have authentic evidence that the power of steam was not only known, but practically applied, 120 years before the Marquis of Worcester published his " Century of Inventions." The late Mr. Colton was partly in error in attributing to the " hoary Sage" this discovery : we have sufficiently proved that it was known on the continent many years before ; but we may admit, that the Marquis of Worcester was the first Englishman who nourished this infant Alcides.

*Note*¹⁴, page 15.

“ Command his speed, and quick elope,
And double distance th’ antelope;”

The Antelope is, I believe, the swiftest of the quadruped tribe.

*Note*¹⁵, page 15.

“ Then mast-less, sail-less, oar-less ride
Triumphant against wind and tide;”

With respect to the advantages we now enjoy over the earlier world, it is impossible to overlook the accession of strength obtained by the force of steam, as applied to every species of machinery. It is manifest that those powerful auxiliaries of warfare are here alluded to, which, like the slumbering whirlwind, only await the call of some skilful hand, sufficiently strong, not only to raise, but to rule them. Their power is already known; but it is a power at present too unmanageable to be applied, and therefore too dangerous to be subservient.

Note ¹⁶, page 16.

“ Though prompt to pile, if needs be done,
A pyramid, by set of sun,
Or mountains move, might gall a train
Of harnessed elephants in vain;”

M. Dupin, a French writer, but one who has most profoundly investigated the resources of England, gives the following observations on the almost incredible effects that it would be possible to produce, on a supposition (of course, for the sake of argument,) that the whole steam-power of England could be concentrated in one focus, and brought to bear on one object. “The great pyramid of Egypt required for its erection above one hundred thousand men for twenty years; but, if it were again required to raise the stones from the quarries, and place them at their present height, the action of the steam-engines of England, which are at most managed by thirty thousand men, would be sufficient to produce this effect in *eighteen hours*. If it were required to know how long a time they would take to cut the stones, and move them from the quarries to the pyramid, a very few days would be found sufficient.”

*Note*¹⁷, page 17.

“ But Time, nor rhyme, can tell the throes—
 As perfect from imperfect rose—
 Of minds that writhed in Error’s yoke,
 Ere from Art’s acorn burst her oak.”

The last fifteen stanzas, descriptive of the various powers of the steam-engine, give a most perfect picture of the miscellaneous arts to which those powers are applied. It were difficult to find a poetic description of noise and smoke, which so well conveys to the mind a just idea of that which, as our author shrewdly observes,

“ Has half subjected time and space.”

*Note*¹⁸, page 17.

“ Long was the labour, tough the toil,
 Ceaseless the conflict and turmoil
 Of those, that PREJUDICE that old
 Antæus braved, and half controlled.”

The personification of Prejudice, in the following thirty or five-and-thirty stanzas, is admirable: the allegory is

well kept up, and the sarcasm, that deals many a deadly blow, shews the lamented author to have had more poignant wit than badness of heart.

*Note*¹⁹, page 21.

“ He had a guide that knew the way
O'er all his grounds, by night or day;”

We are inclined to think that this stanza implies a compass.

*Note*²⁰, page 22.

“ He dragged the mile-stone from its bed
That Ajax hurled at Hector's head,
On which was graved, what must destroy
All cavil—‘SEVEN MILES FROM TROY!’”

Antiquaries often destroy the identity, by the very proofs they bring forward to support it.

*Note*²¹, page 23.

“ With lantern of Diogenes,
And slipper of Empedocles,”

“ —— Ardentem frigidus Ætnam
Insiluit ——”

It is not known whether the philosopher, whose name is here introduced, discovered the secrets of the mountain; but it is on record, that the mountain did not keep the secret of the philosopher. This instance might have been the first, but it certainly has not been the last, wherein a slipper has led to some very interesting and awkward disclosures.

*Note*²², page 23.

“ And self-same ink-horn, and ink too!
That Martin at the Devil threw ;”

It is well known that this incident in the life of Luther is held in great veneration at Wittenberg; at least, by the person who shows the room in which he was sitting when his satanic majesty appeared. The black spot is renewed

every year, and the indenture in the wall occasioned by the inkhorn very carefully preserved, as I can attest, from ocular demonstration.

*Note*²³, page 25.

“ And an old almanack to show
Who live the longest, youngest grow,
And that the world, as *here* displayed,
Was *oldest*, when it first was made !”

The advocates for the system of *early* antiquity will find some difficulty in getting over this truth.

*Note*²⁴, page 26.

“ The despot Doubt, &c.

Almost all persons who are wedded to Prejudice, when they find themselves powerfully assailed, begin to entertain Doubt. Sad illusion! for incredulity is the certain fruit.

*Note*²⁵, page 26.

“ The despot Doubt—that some hath taught
They’re not of bone or body wrought.”

The allusion here to two writers who endeavoured to prove, the one that we have no body, and the other that we have no soul, is introduced most happily, as arising from “*the despot Doubt.*” When we consider how very little we know of those mysterious arcana upon which most of our speculations must of necessity be built;—when we find ourselves obliged in candour to confess that our knowledge of them hardly amounts to the power even of defining them; we pause. Take, for instance, time and space, matter and motion, life and death: then it will appear the less extraordinary, that one philosopher should have written so plausibly to prove that we have no souls, and another philosopher so irrefutably to prove that we have no body; while we, who are no philosophers, find that this abstraction of the parts has not diminished the whole, but that we continue the same, in the full enjoyment both of our souls and of our bodies, in spite of those philosophers.

*Note*²⁶, page 27.

“ DOUBT !—Anarch old—that staggers all”—

Doubt may be useful in science; but, in all that relates to morality and religion, it is a rank poison to the soul: it is by far a more serious enemy to our happiness and well-doing than mere prejudice, and not at all to be laughed at, like the latter.

*Note*²⁷, page 35.

“ But think not *such*, their fate bewailed,
When friendship frowned, or fortune failed,
Or life!—Death but insured their prize,
As night hides earth t’ unveil the skies!”

We may venture to pronounce this idea as one of the most beautifully expressed in the English language. The same thought exists in “Lacon;” so that the author probably felt the chasteness of the line to be sufficiently perfect to permit him to repeat it in “Modern Antiquity.” There is no monotony in the repetition of an original and beautiful idea.

*Note*²⁸, page 36.

“ To find and count his merits o'er
The noisome cell of Death explore,
Thus Indians search, so travellers tell,
For finest pearls—the putrid shell !”

On the coast of Coromandel, the pearl oysters are laid up in heaps to rot and putrify, in order that they may more easily surrender their treasure.

*Note*²⁹, page 37.

“ Wisdom alone, refreshed by time,
Still marches onward to her prime,
Doomed, like the lines herself can teach,
To approach it never—never reach.”

The Asymptotes, or certain lines in that part of mathematics called the conic sections, that constantly approach nearer and nearer to each other, yet can never meet, though continued infinitely.



MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

SOCIETY.

WHERE joy but works some other's woe,
Each good, some other's ill,
And poverty is drain'd, the cup
That overflows to fill:

Where gain is but another's loss,
Each rise, another's fall,
And bloated pomp bedizens one
But at the cost of all:

Where gold a willing *servant* finds
In each, in most—a *slave*;
And law the just and righteous cause
Can insolently brave:

Where dungeons *unadmonish'd* guilt
In *double* darkness bind,
Or from the body loose the chain,
To brutalize the mind :

Where those that rule, by those that serve,
Are hoodwink'd from their birth,
To blind the royal bird, and fix
His fetter'd flight to earth :

Where vice is tax'd, the spendthrift hand
Of public waste to aid,
And *legalised*, that *void* to fill
That *want of virtue* made :

Where bigots, led by knaves, destroy
 With serpent fang the dove ;
And, with a demon's rancour arm'd,
 Approach the god of love :

Where man is *train'd* to murder man,
 And art destruction schools
To multiply the work of death,
 By scientific rules :

Where e'en each gracious element
 That heaven or earth supplies,
We teach, by knowledge better hid,
 Against ourselves to rise :

This is that boasted thing that men
 The *social* compact term—
Of folly, vice, and misery
 The forced but fatal germ.

This to th' Italian's crooked code
An air of truth supplied,
And plann'd for knaves the rich reward
To better men denied.

This to Geneva's madman lent
His triumph o'er the sage,
And half redeem'd the bitter sneer
Of Swift's indignant page.

Oh! warn'd by woe, and taught by time,
Shall reason, full of years,
O'er brutes boast but her sole and sad
Prerogative of tears?

Oh! when will man each boon despise
That makes a brother moan?
And seek, where it alone resides,
In other's bliss—*their own*?

ON BEING ASKED BY A LADY,

WHAT IS WIT?

WHAT'S wit?—'Tis strange that you should ask
That you possess to know;—
'Tis wisdom's arrow, barb'd by truth,
Launch'd from Apollo's bow.

Brief as the lightning; but the darts,
Like those your eyes surround,
Make e'en the pierced their brilliance own,
And half forgive the wound.

To toil denied, or art, Wit is
Th' immediate gift of heaven,
Like Pallas, from the brain of Jove,
In perfect armour, riven.

It fastest binds the freest minds,
And willing slaves commands ;
Can Argus' hundred eyes eclipse,
And chain Briareus' hands.

Wit can, like Nile, the desert's dearth
With life and verdure grace ;
While all the fertile grandeur own,
But none the *source* can trace !

'Tis the mind's beauty ;—but *where* both
Abound, who dares to teach
Th' unconscious fair what either is,
Will rue the force of each !

OLD AGE.

THOU, anticlimax in life's wrinkled page,
 Worse end of bad beginning—helpless Age!
 That sow'st the thorn, though long the flow'r
 hath fled;
 Alive to torment, but to transport dead;
 Imposing still, through time's still rough'ning
 road,
 With strength diminish'd, an augmented load:
 Slow herald of the tomb! sent but to make
 Man curse that giftless gift thou wilt not take,
 When hope and patience both give up the strife,
 Death is thy cure—for thy disease is life.

ON THE CIRCUMSTANCE OF OLMEDO, THE POET LAUREATE OF PERU, HAVING BEEN SELECTED BY THAT REPUBLIC TO NEGOTIATE ANOTHER LOAN IN LONDON.

THE Poet Laureate from Peru,
In want of ready rhino,
Like many nearer home, that you,
And some, perhaps, that I know,

Selected is to raise the wind;—
A choice discreetly made :
The mission suits the poet's mind,—
To borrow is their trade.

But, as both fact and fable are
Blent in poetic diction,
The borrowing will be fact, we fear ;
The payment—but a fiction !

AMBITION.

O THOU, that bidd'st the brightest close
 Their intellectual eye,
 And to thy dizzy, dangerous height,
 Like hooded falcons,¹ fly:

What is thy summit, but the source
 Whence tears and blood career?
 A height that leaves us nought to hope,
 But everything to fear.

ON SEEING THE BUST OF SOCRATES

IN A DEBATING SOCIETY.

GODS! who'd have sought, in *such a place!*
 The philosophic Greek?—
 'Tis well for him, he cannot *hear*;
 For *you*, he cannot speak.

REDDES DULCE LOQUI.

'Tis all in vain :—I have no more
Nor force nor fire at will,
Though doom'd the trodden round to tread,—
A race-horse in a mill.
Like that forlorn and flaunting form,
The rake's abandon'd toy,
Whom grief forbids, but want compels
To wear the face of joy,
My woeworn Muse, too long assailed
By sorrow, sickness, pain,
In vain resumes the lighter note,—
Thalia's jocund strain.

HOPE.

HOPE for Experience boldly steers,
And gains that chilling shore,
But only to be wreck'd on ice,
And sink, to rise no more.
This is that hope whose sordid views
To earth alone are given ;
That hope that wreck nor ruin fears,
Her anchor casts in heaven.
For he that would outride the storm,
Though whirlwinds waked the blast,
Makes that his first and only hope,
That all must make their last.

HUMAN HAPPINESS.

O THOU, that all admire, adore,
Pursue, but ne'er possess,
Away;—delude some easier fool,
Thou phantom, Happiness!

Thou art life's long disastrous game,
That can the craftiest beat;
While Death looks on, but to reveal
When 'tis too late, the cheat.

Safe is the whirlwind's boding calm,
And true the treacherous sea,
And real all the mirage paints,
Compared, thou dream, with thee!

Thy still retreating Paradise
Flies, as we near the spot ;
A land from hope *our Pisgah* still,
Explor'd, but enter'd not.

Delusion, Salem's dotard king
In pleasures *past* could see:
Who kens the same in those *to come*
Is wiser far than he.

A TRUISM.

No man can give, 'tis *falsely thought*,
Another what he has not got:
Nelson, that not a grain could boast
Of fear himself, gave others most;
And many a muse, that *never nods*,
Can lull to sleep both men and gods.

DESPAIR.

TIME, on thy shield of adamant,
Shivers his scythe; the shock
Is as the wave that breaks in foam
Around th' impassive rock.

Fate's direst page unmoved to read
Is thine, and thine alone;
Thy Gorgon glance both Hope and Fear
Hath petrified to stone.

Full oft before thy withering scowl
Death drops his dark design;
Or, grasping thee, recoils to find
An *icier* hand in *thine*!

ON THE
STATUE OF THE VENUS DE MEDICIS.

DISCOMFITED, dejected here!

Both Time and Nature stand :

This—his destructive scythe distrusts,

This—her creative hand.

ODE ON THE DEATH OF LORD BYRON.

WE mourn thy wreck ;—that mighty mind

Did whirlwind passions whelm,

While wisdom wavered, half inclined

To quit the dangerous helm.

Thou wast an Argosy of cost,

Equipped, enriched in vain ;

Of gods the work, of men the boast,

Glory thy port ; and doomed to gain

That splendid haven, only to be lost :

Lost, e'en when Greece, with conquest blest,
Thy gallant bearing hailed ;
Then sighs from Valour's mailed breast,
And tears of Beauty failed.
Oh hadst thou in the battle died,
Triumphant e'en in death,
The patriot's as the poet's pride,
While *both* Minervas twined thy wreath ;
Then had thy *full* career malice and fate defied !

What architect, with choice design,
Of Rome, or Athens styled,
E'er left a monument like thine ?
And all from *ruins* piled !
A prouder motto marks thy stone
Than Archimedes's tomb :
He asked a fulcrum ; thou demandedst *none*,
But, reckless of past, present, and to come,
Didst on *thyself* depend, to shake the world—
alone.

Thine eye, to all extremes and ends
And opposites, could turn;
And, like the congelated lens,
Could sparkle, freeze, or burn:
But, in thy mind's abyss profound,
As in some limbo vast,
More shapes and monsters did abound,
To set the wondering world aghast,
Than wave-worn Noah fed, or starry Tuscan
found.

Was Love thy lay,—Cythæra rein'd
Her car, and own'd the spell;
Was Hate thy theme,—that murky fiend
For hotter earth, left hell:
The palaced crown, the cloistered cowl,
Moved but thy spleen, or mirth;
Thy smile was deadlier than thy scowl;
In guise unearthly didst thou roam the earth,
Screen'd in Thalia's mask, to drug the tragic
bowl.

Lord of thine own imperial sky,
 In virgin "pride of place,"
Thou soaredst, where others could not fly,
 And hardly dared to gaze.
The Condor thus his pennoned vane
 O'er Cotopaxa spreads ;
But should he ken the prey, or scent the slain,
Nor chilling height, nor burning depth he dreads,
From Ande's crystal crag, to Lima's sultry plain.

Like Lucan's, *early* was thy tomb,
 And *more* than Bion's mourned ;
For *still* such lights themselves consume ;—
 The *brightest*, briefest burned : —
But from thy blazing shield recoiled
 Pale Envy's bolt of lead ;
She, but to work thy triumphs toiled,
Then, muttering coward curses, fled,
Thee, thine own strength alone, like matchless
 Milo, foil'd.

We *prize* thee that thou didst not fear
What stoutest hearts might rack,
And didst the diamond Genius wear,
That tempts, yet *foils* the attack:
We *mourn* thee, that thou *wouldst* not find,
While prison'd in thy clay,
(Since such there were,) some kindred mind;
For Friendship lasts through Life's long day,
And doth with surer chain than love or beauty
bind :

We *blame* thee, that with baleful light
Thou did'st astound the world ;
A comet, plunging from his height,
And into chaos hurled ;
Accorded King of Anarch power,
And talent misapplied,
That hid thy god in evil hour,
Or showed him only to deride,
And o'er the gifted blaze of thine own bright-
ness lour.

Thy fierce volcanic breast, o'ercast
With Hecla's frosty cloke,
All earth with fire impure could blast,
And darken heaven with smoke:
O'er ocean, continent, and isle,
The conflagration ran:
Thou, from thy throne of ice, the while,
Did'st the red ruin calmly scan,
And tuned Apollo's harp, with Nero's ghastly
smile.

What now avails that Muse of fire
Her nothing of a name;
That master hand, and matchless lyre,
What have they gained,—but Fame?
Fame, Fancy's child, by Folly fed
On breath of meanest things;
A phantom woo'd in virtue's stead,
That Envy to the living brings,
And silent, solemn mockery to the dead.

Ne'er since the deep-toned Theban sung
Unto the listening Nine,
Hath classic hill or valley rung
With harmony like thine;
Who now shall wake that widowed lyre?
There breathes but *one*,² that dares
To that Herculean task aspire;
But less than thou for Fame he cares,
And scorns both hope and fear, ambition and
desire.

FRIENDSHIP.

To the flaw'd falchion trust your life,
The shatter'd mirror mend;
But hope not—fractured once—to join
The link that lock'd a friend;

'Twere all in vain :—that charmed link
That *hearts* in concord held,
Was not of steel, but adamant,
And, broken, will not *weld* !³

NEQUE SEMPER ARCUM.

THE calms of life, without the storms,
Were but a stagnant pool;
One long, but listless holiday,
Robb'd of its zest—*the school*.

Joy for her truest tablet takes
Some sorrow's parting shroud,
And paints her richest, brightest hues,
Like Iris, on a *cloud*.

NAPOLEON.

HE won the laurels, and with them renown,
But lost them both, to shape them to a crown;
And, sworn to conquer kings, self-conquer'd fell,
When he himself the royal list would swell;
And, with the fasces, for the sceptre made
A sorry change,—the substance for the shade:
Untaught what madness to the million clings,
Who forms to facts prefer, and names to things.
Triumphant for a space, by craft and crime,
Two foes he left unconquer'd,—Truth and Time:
Oh! had he for true glory shaped his course,
He'd 'scaped repentance living—dead, remorse!

FAME.

WHAT is Fame, when the spade our last bed
hath design'd,
But a tune to the deaf, or a torch to the blind ;
An ovation decreed, though the hero be fled :
Like the trump of th' archangel, 'tis blown o'er
the dead ;
But, unlike that dread blast, none but fools it
amazes ;
And you'll find, when too late, it nor rouses nor
raises.

EXAMPLE.

His faults, that in a private station sits,
Do mainly harm him only that commits :
Those placed on high a bright example owe,—
Much to themselves, more to the crowd below.

A paltry watch, in private pocket borne,
 Misleads but him alone by whom 'tis worn :
 But the town-clock, that domes or towers display,
 By going wrong, leads half the world astray.

JEU DE MOT,

ON MR. HUNT'S ADDRESS TO THE RADICALS, AT THE
 CROWN AND ANCHOR TAVERN; WHEN HE INFORMED
 THEM THAT HE HAD EVEN RELINQUISHED HIS TEA,
 BECAUSE IT PAID A TAX, ALTHOUGH TEA CONSTI-
 TUTED ONE OF HIS GREATEST COMFORTS.

HUNT rose⁴ to expound with what violence he,
 And stoical struggle, abandon'd his tea:
 An abandonment truly both safe and in season,
 For Treason, if T be omitted, is reason.

THE FATES.

HASTE, haste, ye fatal sisters three,
Your welcome scissors take,
And cut this woe-worn thread of life,
Or else methinks 't will break.
And ere another skein you spin
From such a dismal thread,
May Minos break your wheel, and send
Ixion's in its stead.

FAITH AND HOPE.

'MID *total* darkness, Hope herself
Is, like the diamond, dark ;
But *Faith*, 'mid murkiest Erebus,
Emits her brightest spark :

A spark that death's contrasted gloom
But with *more* light supplies;
As night's black pall, that hides the earth,
More clearly shows *the skies!*

HUMILITY.

THE loaded bee the lowest flies;
The richest pearl the deepest lies;
The stalk the most replenished
Doth bow the most its modest head:
Thus deep humility we find
The mark of every master-mind;
The highest gifted lowliest bends,
And merit meekest condescends,
And shuns the fame that fools adore,—
That puff that bids a feather soar.

CONFESSION.

CONFESSION, like physic, 'mid mortal extremes,
In the hands of a skilful concoctor,
Is an excellent thing for the patient, it seems,
Though not quite so good for the doctor.

Hence, *some* spiritual quacks, in attending their
sick,
On the virtues insist of confessions;
But should a small thorn their own consciences
prick,
Their sole lenitive pills are professions.

As to *tears* for our sins, if amendment it work,
An ounce-phial full, ample perhaps is;
And too little the *Heidelberg tun*, if there lurk
At the bottom the seeds of relapses.

But confession—what is 't? but to lighten the
ship,

With a cargo of sins, that hard ride did;
To be fish'd up again, for a *fair weather* trip,
The moment the storm has subsided.

PRETEXTS AND MOTIVES.

Dost think those gilt and hollow cones
That *front* an organ cause the tones?
Ah, no! those pealing notes proceed
From tubes of *baser* metal *hid*.

This same remark, we might advance,
Holds good in life's mysterious dance:
In *front* the pompous pretext find,
But the mean motive skulks behind.

AURUM POTENTIUS ICTU FULMINEO.

THAT universal idol, Gold,
In homage all unites ;
Without a temple, 't is adored,
And has no hypocrites.

Nay, more, Gold's warmest devotees
Strive most to *hide* their zeal ;
And he that loves this idol most,
Would most that love conceal.

This idol has prerogatives
Peculiar and its own :
Unlike its brother idols, 'tis
Nor block, nor stock, nor stone.

It can give eyes unto the blind,
And tongues unto the dumb:
Nay, more, can make the lynx a mole,
And elocution—mum!

TO THE TRUE POET.

CREATION's heir, and Fancy's fav'rite child,
Thou canst, from India's wealth, or Afric's wild,
From far or near, from depth or dizzy height,
Cull thy rich stores, t' instruct us, or delight:
Abundance draw from dearth, and radiance from
night.

Thus, to th' alembic of thy glowing mind
All nature comes,—but comes to be refined:
Each thought that feculence or grossness stains
Thy wit or judgment sublimates or strains,
Till all the alloy be purged, and nought but gold
remains.

Thus Ocean drinks the foul and turbid tide,
When flood and torrent plough the mountain's
side;

But soon in genial showers he sends them forth,
Pure as the pearls that deck Aurora's birth,
To feed the famish'd land, and cheer the jocund
earth.

PAIN.

WRITTEN DURING A PERIOD OF SEVERE AGONY.

PAIN, thou sole *perfect* thing to earth assign'd,
The body take, but spare, oh, spare the mind!
Wreck'd on thy rocks, or on thy billows tost,
Oh, save the compass, though the bark be lost!
Here reason's self not without fear presides,
And, like the needle, trembles while she guides.

TO DR. PARR'S BIOGRAPHERS.

YE little wits, that buzz'd awhile
 Around the Doctor's wig,
 With scraps of Latin and of Greek,
 Fresh from your idol big,—

In pity both to us and him,
 And to yourselves, be dumb,
 Nor with your learned lumber load
 The mighty Grecian's tomb.

The wit that *ex re natá* shone
 Is dull at second hand:
 You have the fiddle,—but the stick,
 We fear, you can't command.

The joke 'mid smoke, and tale 'mid ale,
I fear will but traduce him:
You want, I ween, your master's art,—
“ *Ex fumo dare lucem.*”

Would Bloomfield undertake the task,
We might digest the story:
When scholar doth on scholar write,
At least 't is “ *con amore.*”

But oft our *own* remains are made
Against *ourselves* to rise,—
A grovelling, Grub-street, buzzing brood
Of maggots, worms, and flies!

JULIUS AND JULIA.

THIS *happy* pair the day and night
 To tax each other waste,
 With every failing under heaven,
 Except a *want of taste*.

In *one* thing only both agree,
 And mutual discord waive,—
 He Julia joins, to wet with tears
 Her former husband's grave!

 ALARMISTS.

THERE are, that when they wet their pen
 Must still turn propheciers,
 While fact and date, both obstinate,
 Turn up to prove them liars.

For Britain's land this croaking band
 Much evil have been brewing ;
 But she is sure to thrive the more,
 When such predict her ruin.

JUDGMENTS.

DIVISUM IMPERIUM CUM JOVE CÆSAR HABET.

WHEN *nations* celebrate their rights,
 Should storm or cloud arise,
 Behold a judgment,⁵ cry the priests,
 And vengeance from the skies :

Should heaven's artillery mar the day
 That splendid mummery suits,
 Oh, then the lightnings salvoes flash,
 And thunder's roar salutes.

“OREMUS UT SIT MENS SANA IN CORPORE
SANO.”

THE body and the mind, by links
More firm than man and wife,
For better or for worse are wed,
In banns that last for life.

Like too ill-coupled hounds, a sad
And snarling pair, they start;
Two friends, alas! that can't agree;
Two foes that cannot part!

This would the noblest game pursue,
And course the lion's track;
But *this* to filth and garbage stoops,
And pulls his brother back.

Happy, when both, precisely match'd
In courage, speed, and breath,
Life's course well run, come *cheerful* in
Together—at *the death*!

WISDOM AND FOLLY.

To borrow Folly's cap and bells
Though Wisdom oft descends,
Yet Folly, to her cost, doth find
That Wisdom never *lends*.

That Wisdom oft hath play'd the fool,
Is seen in every age;
But here the bargain ends, for ne'er
Hath Folly play'd the sage.

WRITTEN AT MIDNIGHT.

THE mind, by worldly wants and common cares
Too much incumber'd, scarce herself appears,
When *day*, with all its toil and turmoil, brings
T' impede her flight, or discompose her wings,
It's idly strenuous hours, and host of trivial
things.

But solemn midnight *all* her force inspires,
Wakes all her strength, and fans her dormant
fires,
Each earth-bred mist and vapour puts to flight,
Till the rapt soul, like Isr'el's pillar'd light,
Clok'd in a cloud by day, becomes a torch by
night!

BLESSINGS IN DISGUISE.

CALAMITIES are sent for ends
That prove them true but bitter friends,
 That wiser make the wise ;
And, like those book-devouring flames
That Alexandria's⁶ tale proclaims,
 “ Are blessings in disguise : ”

These saved us from those ills that had
In outward pomp of wisdom clad,
 From others' follies grown ;
And fierce affliction's fiery dart
We thank, if it amend the heart,
 And save us from our own.

T I M E.

TIME's telescope more wonderful appears
 E'en than his scythe, and deeper truths conveys;
 His tube⁷ prospective lengthens days to years;
 Reversed, our years it shortens into days!

Then ponder well the substance, and the sum
 Of what, unscann'd, a contradiction seems;
 Valued aright, compared with time to come,
 Time past is but the wealth of him that dreams.

 P E R S E C U T I O N .

RIPE Persecution, like the plant
 Whose nascence Mocha boasted,
 Some bitter fruit produced, whose worth
 Was never known, till *roasted*.

Such odour from that holocaust^s
In fragrant incense rose,
That Truth a deathless vigour gain'd,
That half redeem'd her foes.

ADVERSITY.

ADVERSITY misunderstood
Becomes a double curse :
Her chastening hand improves the good,
But makes the wicked worse.

Thus clay more obdurate becomes,
To the fierce flame consign'd ;
While gold in that red ordeal melts,
But melts to be refin'd.

PRAYER.

ARRESTED suns and tranquill'd seas declare
 To heav'n and earth th' omnipotence of prayer,
 That gives the hopeless hope, the feeble might,
 Outruns the swift, and puts the strong to flight,
 The noontide arrow foils, and plague that stalks
 by night :

Unmatch'd in power, unbounded in extent,
 As omnipresent as omnipotent,
 To no meridian nor clime confined,
 Man with his fellow man, and mind to mind,
 'Tis hers, in links of love and charity,⁹ to bind.

But farther still extends her awful reign :
 To her *indeed* belongs *that* golden chain

From *fabled* God and their Olympus riv'n ;
But, since to Truth and her adorers given,
E'en with HIS MAKER man to join, and earth
with heav'n.

Then let those lips that never pray'd, begin :
We must or cease to pray, or cease to sin ;
Each earth-born want and wish, a grov'ling
brood,
Are oft mistaken, or misunderstood ;
But who could *dare to pray* for ought that is not
good ?

Not that our prayers make Heav'n more prompt
to give,
But they make *us* more worthy to receive :
There is in that celestial treasury
Wealth inexhaustible, admission free ;
But he that never prays, rejects the golden key.

PROLIXITY.

To make their volume little, is
To some no little task;
But the small phial oft contains
The essence of the cask.

Her book-debts Wisdom pays in gold,
But Dullness, though she fill
Your coffers to the very brim,
It is but copper still.

Words are but Wisdom's counters, which
In circulation sent,
She limits to the capital
And wealth they represent.

Cloy'd by prolixity, we search
An intellectual feast,
From those that most deserve our time,
And yet demand the least.

CONCORDIA DISCORDS.

Who least conform, the best agree;
For salient points of mind,
In those that in our friend recede,
A closer contact find:

Like pasteboard maps for children plann'd,
They dovetail into one;
But spheres that into contact rush,
Each other seek—to shun.

“ LUMENQUE JUVENTÆ
PURPUREUM.”

EYES that nor tears nor sorrows dim,
 The cloudless brow, th' elastic limb,
 That seem'd on air to tread,
 With thoughts that made it witchery
 And bliss enough to breathe—and be,
 These, these, with youth, are fled :
 Fled, but not mourn'd : remembrance wakes
 No bitter pang for what Time takes ;
 I mourn for what he brings !
 The dread realities of truth,
 Sad substitutes for dreams of youth,
 This, this the bosom wrings.
 Each generous feeling unsubdued
 As yet by fraud,—that friendship woo'd,
 Nor ask'd the costly price !

Alas! though quell'd, cannot be kill'd,
But droop, by cold experience chill'd,
Like flow'rets lock'd in ice.

Youth's jocund suns, and seasons blithe,
When time had wings, but not a scythe,
With these I calmly part;
But, as the wreck that braves the deep,
Oh, let me still, though *broken*, keep
The fragments of—*a heart*!

IMPROMPTU

ON THE BISHOP OF AIX, WHO LATELY BEQUEATHED
HIS HEART TO THE JESUITS.

THAT prelate shrewdly play'd his part
That left the Jesuits his heart:
A head they had,—'twere mad to doubt it,
But as to *heart*, they were without it.

UNDE ET QUO.

FROM *whence* to *where* we know not, sent,
 A fever'd dream to try,
 Then sink from darkness into night:
 This 't is to live, and die!

CHRIST touch'd those ears that could not hear,
 And eyes that could not see,
 And said, Leave *whence* you came to GOD,
 But WHERE you go—to ME!

Then to the STAR of Jacob bow!
 All ye that love the light:
 Without him, wisdom is a dream,
 And all our knowledge—night.

A MISTAKE.

SINCE fools alone *all* things believe
In cloister hatch'd, or college,
Some, by believing nothing, think
They're at the height of knowledge.

And yet, to have no faith demands
More faith than is supposed,
For ¹⁰sceptics have their creed,—of things
Incredible composed.

Some truths *above* our reason, we
Reject not, but receive:
Against all reason, infidels
Unnumber'd lies believe.

LINES;—BEING AN ANSWER TO A LETTER FROM AN OCTOGENARIAN, INFORMING ME THAT HE HAD GIVEN UP AUTHORSHIP, AND THAT A FRIEND OF HIS WAS ABOUT TO WRITE HIS LIFE.

BIOGRAPHERS.

POL ME OCCIDISTIS AMICI.

MAY you live to *five* score,
 If 't is but to write more,
 And delight with instruction to blend;
 But *your life*, strange to note,
 E'en your death might promote,—
 So beware of your good-natured friend.

Both his zeal and his love
He'll officiously prove,
In a way that your ghost may distress :
He'll suggest your invention
Was but a pretension,
And the zest of your wit but finesse.

He'll swear your best thought
From the Sanscrit you caught,
And the pride of your muse from the Grecian ;
Till, 'twixt hint and surmise,
Nought is left but surprise
That you e'er reach'd a second edition.

I'm afraid, I'm afraid,
Like the rest of their trade,
Undertakers of fame too perpend
Their pay but half won,
And their *job* but half done,
That does not in a burial end.

Undertakers of Fame
Never scent out a name,
Till corruption the carcass assault;
And *their* sheets, meant for binding,
Like t' others term'd winding,
But a *subject* prepare for a vault!

INSTINCT.

MAN cannot estimate his bright
Prerogative too high,
If to the skies it point, and rests
Upon humility:

But ponder well, th' o'erweening pride
Of reason to confute,
How oft she stoops to gather light
And counsel from the brute.

See unassuming instinct all
Perform, but nought profess,
Yet seldom suffer from mistake,
And never from excess:

Behold her fly the common ill,
Or, with prospective care,
That baffles reason, means to meet
And master it prepare.

Then let these truths, from Nature cull'd,
E'en though they humble, guide
Reveal'd man's wisdom to promote,
And to restrain his pride.

BAYLE.

Who had escaped the tomb, could wit prevail,
 Or wisdom?—Wit and Wisdom answer, Bayle!
 Star of a lowering sky that shunn'd the light,
 Still more refulgent from surrounding night,
 He wielded Luther's force, without his rage,—
 Erasmus and Melancthon of his age:
 Young eyes, that o'er his ponderous folios pore,
 Deem them too much, yet read and wish them
 more,
 And to that feast return, divided quite
 Betwixt instruction, wonder, and delight.
 Yet he that knew so much decided nought:
 Lost in perplexity, or depth of thought,
 Holding the key of Truth within his hand,
 On Doubt,¹¹ her vestibule, behold him stand,
 And point, like Moses, to that brighter spot,
 Pursued, explored, attain'd, but enter'd not.

A CHARACTER.

VENTOSUS, in each deed, and thought, and speech,
Still strives the lofty and the grand to reach;
Not over wise, for he could ne'er descend
To seek instruction from his bosom friend:
He would be proud, but—place them side by
side,
With him Religion higher stands than pride;
So high, she occupies his head alone,
And there exalted sits, as on a throne,
But ne'er descends, to melt the heart, or free
The liberal hand, or bow the stubborn knee.

AN IMPROMPTU

ON FIRST HEARING THE NEWS OF LORD BYRON'S
DEATH.

WHY didst thou live? or, living, die?
When Greece, for righteous victory,
 Call'd on thy sword and pen;
To ennoble more thy noble name,
While both Minervas crown'd thy fame,—
 In both, the first of men!

I knew thee well;—that stirring mind,
And high chivalric spirit, twined
 With Heliconian wreath,
Had spurr'd thee to the noblest field
E'er won by sword, or lost, *in shield*
 That bore thee thence in death.

That forms, and foul hypocrisy,
And fools, and knaves, should triumph high,
Is more than *we* can scan :
That *cant* should live, and talent die,
When most we want her energy,
’T is woe—but such is man !

“QUISQUE SUÆ FORTUNÆ FABER EST.”

BLAME not the stars nor destinies,—
In thine own¹² hand thy prowess lies ;
Thy map of life review :
The march was plain, but thou, beguiled
By some short cut, or prospect wild,
Hast wandered from the true.

Self-pride, of good and ill the source,
Still prompts again the tortuous course
Of error to begin;
Blames, for the ruin and the rout
Of all our hopes, the foe without,
Not the false friend¹³ within.

What wonder if thy bark, the sport
Of winds and waves, outrun the port,
And havoc all o'erwhelm,
If passions, sent to swell the gale,
But not to steer, or trim the sail,
Drive reason from the helm.

VOLTAIRE.

YES! Phœbus and the Nine might all despair,
Without the pen of Bayle, to paint Voltaire:
A form Monboddo might with rapture hail,
And beg to search minutely for the tail;
With scarce enough of muscle, nerve, or skin
To sheathe the trenchant wit that lurk'd within;
A wit that, like the tiger's velvet paw,
In deadly gambols dealt th' elastic claw;
And, not unworthy of that form, a face
Made up of half expression, half grimace,
That, struggling still to smother a conceal'd
And latent scorn, what it would hide reveal'd;
With eye that secrets from all bosoms wrung,
And curling lip, that spoke without a tongue;
For all we love, loathe, seek, or shun, nor tear
Nor smile had they,—but for the whole a sneer;

Features that fix, but freeze our gaze, and yet
We must remember—but would fain forget.

By bigots branded, but by sisters loved,
By smatterers more than by the wise approved;
Champion of freedom, but himself the slave
Of flatterers; hope and terror of the knave;
At once the magazine and mark of wit,
A didapper, as often miss'd as hit;
He never strongly soar'd, nor deeply dived,
But muddled truth, at which he ne'er arrived.

In rhyme a dabbler, but too proud to praise,
And oft too weak t' excel another's lays,
The swan of Avon his marauding muse
Could stoop to pillage first, and then abuse;
A remale pen, while Pallas smiled, rejects
With wit the censure, and the crime detects.

Few friends had he; but, what is strange, a foe
He found in Frederick, and in Rousseau:
His head the hero, not his heart rever'd;
The sophist both decried, malign'd, and fear'd;
Yet he that march'd through conquest to a
 throne,
A philosophic despot, brighter shone
Than he that proffered friendship rudely spurned,
To brand with scorn, that on himself returned.

Yet Ferney still redeems her patron's fame,
And grateful lauds her benefactor's name;
Whilst some bright spots his panegyrists boast,
And one transcendant act—itself a host,
Unmix'd applause and approbation wins,
And CALAS covers multitudes of sins.—

We grant, could Reason with a laugh be bribed,
Won by a jest, or by a jeer proscribed,

A sneer the touchstone, ridicule the test,—
His page the brightest shines, if not the best :
But, foil'd by Truth, these twinklers fade away,
As minor stars before the lamp of day.
Long had the wits their bitterest gall applied,
He still survived them all, and more defied :
Smother'd at last in honey'd flattery,
It was his doom an insect death to die.
The mark he aimed at, hardier HAROLD hit
With bolder energy and brighter wit :
Alike their object, and alike their fate,
Half doom'd t' idolatry, and half to hate ;
THE LAST, incompetent and all unskill'd,
Ought but a hovel or a stew to build ;
BOTH, strong to pull a church or palace down,
To break a crosier, or to shake a crown.

THE BARD.

“IGNEUS
EST OLLIS VIGOR, ET CÆLESTIS ORIGO!”

THAT sacred beam that warms the poet's mind
E'en by himself can never be defined,
And, like the darkness that in Egypt dwelt,
May not delineated be, but felt:
It is not of the heart, nor of the head,
But of THE INMOST SOUL, sustain'd and fed
By that ambrosial feast to Israel given,—
Gather'd on earth,¹⁴ but sent direct from heaven!

But envy not, contented sons of clay,
The rare possessor of this transcendant ray,
That dooms full oft its earthly shrine to prove
The fate of Semele embraced by Jove!

'T is a devouring flame,—a torch to illumine
And lighten others, but itself consume:
E'en thus it seems to gross corporeal eyes,—
But know that HE that bears it, death defies;
He asks nor sculptured brass nor breathing bust
To cancel "earth to earth" and "dust to dust;"
More dear to him his very throes and pains
Than all ambition gives, or avarice gains;
Throes that no common offspring bring to birth,
All time their heritage, their domain all earth;
That fire that wastes his strength, and day by day,
As sword the scabbard, wastes his frame away,
Lights up a lamp that richer gifts bestows
Than all the wealth that famed Aladdin's shows;
A lamp whose dying rays the brightest rise,
And their last glimmerings beam an earnest of the
skies.

SOCRATES.

IN all your philosophic drove,
From stoa, colonade, or grove,
 You had but one alone;
And him, O Athens! Athens prized
At nought,—you basely sacrificed,
 To flatter a buffoon.

Where was your famed Minerva then?
Did she direct your wisest men?
 Did she concoct the bowl?
Ah no! with indignation fled
That goddess bright, but in her stead
 To rule, she left her owl.

“VULNUS ALIT VENIS ET CÆCO CARPITUR IGNI.”

JEALOUSY.

O THOU, for ever doomed to prove
 The comrade and the curse of love,
 The bravest thou canst force to yield,
 And pierce them through their very shield :¹⁵
Self-pride, of *other* ills the cure,
 More fatal makes thy shaft, and sure.
 The *task* thou settest, is to guess
 And watch our enemy's success :
 And what thy *wages*?—but to know
 The triumph of our deadliest foe ;
 That fatal secret, that conceal'd
 Destroyed our peace, and more, reveal'd :
 Then, goaded on from bad to worse,
 We seek revenge, but find remorse ;
 Remorse—the serpent for the dove,—
 Thy *changeling* Jealousy—for Love!

LINES

ADDRESSED TO LANE FOX, ESQ.

WHOSE HOUSE WAS DESTROYED BY FIRE, IMMEDIATELY
AFTER THE CONFLAGRATION OF YORK MINSTER;
TOWARDS THE RESTORATION OF WHICH HE MUNIFI-
CENTLY GAVE A THOUSAND POUNDS.

WHOSE stately pile is that, whose wreck proclaims
The dismal triumph of th' o'erwhelming flames?
'Tis his, who sends, obedient to the rod,
A thousand pounds, to build the House of God!

That musty proverb is by thee reversed,—
By misers greeted, and by misery cursed,—
Sent forth in search of others' wants to roam,
Thy charity begins abroad, and ends at home.

COURAGE.

It is not fear, that on the brink
 Of danger shakes the bold:
 The pulse may falter, but the mind
 Bears onward, uncontroll'd.

There is, ere daring deeds be done,
 A momentary strife:—
 'Tis Nature's due, e'en when we prize
 Less than ourselves our life.

The throbbing heart, the quivering lip,
 That shook a Marlborough's¹⁶ frame,
 Were but the throes,—the giant birth
 Was Blenheim's deathless name!

Thus mother Earth most dreadful is
When she hath most to dread:
The nations from *her trembling* fly,
And cities bow their head.

COMPENSATION.

THOSE that on Fancy's pinion soar
Triumphant o'er their kind,
Oft to that venturous pennon join
A judgment weak, or blind:
Like those seraphic forms that stand
Before the King of kings;
So these, when'er on Truth they gaze,
Their eyes veil with their wings.

DEATH.

THOU King of Terrórs! better term'd
 The terror chief of kings;
 Like them, what art thou? but a name,
 If stripp'd of outward things.

The grief, the conflict, and the pain,
 These—these belong to life;
 The *tempest* HERS, the mandate thine
 That instant stills the strife.

The slimy worm, the mouldering vault,
 The ghastly grinning head,—
 These, these with freezing horror chill
 The living—not the dead.

But wretched man, of fabled woes
Or fancied fears the prey,
Thy coming dreads, yet blindly bears
What's heavier—thy delay!

Disgust of life, and dread of death,
Like wave opposing wave,
A momentary calm command,
Man from himself to save!

Enough we know to make the best
Life's giftless gift decry,
But not enough on death to gaze
With Cato's Roman eye!

Hence, still life's batter'd bark we steer,
Of doubts or fears the sport;
Would fain the tempest fly, but dread,
More than the storm, *the port!*

AVARICE.

PALE Avarice, in vulgar minds,
 Ambition's place doth hold,
 And, as the tyrant's bane is steel,
 The miser's curse is gold.

The tyrant at the banquet sits
 Beneath a falling sword;
 The miser amid plenty starves,—
 His only feast, his hoard.

Both make that costly sacrifice
 Unto the means of *ends*;
 Both start alike, to gain a good
 That neither comprehends.

HOPE.

HOPE is a goddess fairest seen
When Time holds up his veil between;
Her charms are of such doubtful hue,
They cannot bear a closer view.
Approach can mar them,—contact blight,—
And brief possession blast them quite.

FORTITUDE.

THEN neither fail nor quail: thè Christian's breast
Is like some land-lock'd haven, still at rest;
Around it and beyond it skies may scowl,
The tempest triumph, and the whirlwind howl,

But all is sunshine here; that placid eye
Proclaims the great sustaining deity,
To *whom* each power and passion is deferr'd;
Fulfilling, as the wind and storm, his word.
But all unrivall'd must the Godhead reign;
No earthly idol must HIS temple stain.
Wouldst have HIS awful presence fill thine heart,
Give him the *whole*, or *none*,—he scorns a part;
And stand resolved, through peril, storm, or
cloud,
To doff thine armour only for thy shroud:
To such alone, fulfill'd their mortal strife,
Defeat is victory, and death is life.

VICE AND VIRTUE.

WHILE virtue lends a zest to joy,
And bliss to rapture warms,
Our very tears she turns to smiles,
And every pang disarms.

But vice her foul Circean cup
May medicate in vain :
E'en in her mirth some sorrow lurks,
In all her pleasures, pain.

Since this, with voice from heav'n, proclaims
That HE that rules above
Doth on the side of virtue stand,
Let fear be lost in love.

WIT AND TRUTH.

HE that his reason trusts to wit
 Will often lose his way ;
 As he that would by lightning walk,
 Not by the beam of day.

But truth, from depth of wisdom drawn,
 Pure, permanent, profound,
 Like that deep pearl that ocean yields,
 Befits a monarch crown'd.

 QUANDOQUE BONUS DORMITAT HOMERUS.

WE may be *learn'd* from *others'* thoughts,
Wise—only from our *own* ;
 Reflection is the calm repose
 Of Wisdom, on her throne.

If Homer nod, he nods to wake
With renovated fire :
Pale solar suns, that never set,
But little warmth inspire.

BURNS.

So fine his muse, 'tis half a crime
Burns ever wrote without a rhyme ;
But then his *prose* so pure and terse is,
'Tis Reason's triumph o'er his verses :
Some brains have so bemuddled either,
We wish they had attempted neither.

A NAME.

VIDET—RIDET.

THE card-built house amused our infant age,—
 The child was pleased; but is the man more
 sage?

A breath could level childhood's tottering toy:
 See manhood—effort, art, and time employ,
 To build that brittle name a whisper can destroy!

There is A BOOK where nought our name can spot,
 If we *ourselves* refuse to fix the blot;
 'Tis kept by ONE that sets alike at naught
 The tale with malice or with flatt'ry fraught,—
 HE reads the heart, and *sees* the whisper in the
 thought.

THE VILLAGE HERO.

“INSANAS CURAS, STUDIUMQUE IGNOBILE VULGI
TALIA, MENS HORUM SOBRIA POST HABUIT;
SED QUASI PER LATEBRAS, ET AMÆNA SILENTIA VALLIS,
INNOCUAM VITÆ SUSTINUERE VIAM.”

DEEP in the vale of humble life,
Oft have I seen the mortal strife
By village hero waged ;
Stretch'd on his pallet cold and scant,
With destitution, sickness, want,
And pain, at once engaged.

Deserted in his hour of need
By friends, as false as broken reed,
He to himself is true !
Though unsupported by the loud
But senseless clamours of the crowd,
Or plaudit of the few.

ONE EYE there is,—and THAT alone
This moral grandeur from HIS throne
Contemplates, and sustains :
More high doth HE that peasant hold
Than him that, canopied by gold,
O'er subject millions reigns.

Then think no more that virtue stands
More firm, because admiring bands
Of friends or flatterers cheer ;
Through darkness, silence, solitude,
By none sustain'd, by nought subdued,
She holds her bright career.

Friendless, forlorn, with pain to cope,
And peril doom'd, till faith and hope
Are in fruition lost :
Each ill surmounted, or o'erthrown,
She courts the KEN of ONE alone,
But finds that ONE A HOST!

Thus, throned on rocks, Missouri¹⁷ takes
His giant leap, and thundering shakes
The depth of woods below!
His lone magnificence displays,
Where not an eye the pomp surveys,
But His that bade him flow.

CEREUS IN VITIUM FLECTI.

A PARALLEL CASE.

Who knows the most of man, will least approve,
Will pity much, and often—rarely love:
Quench, cynic sage! thy lantern's glimmering test;
Search thine own heart,—'tis livelier *there* ex-
press'd
How feebly firm the strong, how dimly bright
the best!

The faults,¹⁸ alas! or follies of a friend,
We catch and copy, though we can't commend:
As to his virtues,—if *these* e'er create
A rival effort, 'tis constrain'd or late;
These we commend, indeed, but seldom imitate.

Too closely here the body apes the mind,—
Ills, ailments, maladies of every kind,
From all around us, we contract with ease:
But, sons of Galen! who shall count your fees,
Could ye but render health *as catching as dis-*
ease?

ENERGY.

THE soil, whose rank luxuriance yields
But thistles, thorns, and weeds,
May smile, with yellow Ceres crown'd,
Should culture sow the seeds.

But 't were a waste of time and toil
To till the Lybian sands:
Here Art and Culture both despair,
And Prudence holds her hands.

And thus it is with mind,—her force
And energy misused
In follies, or for purposes
More mischievous abused,

By friendly counsel, arm'd with truth,
May be directed right;
But where 'tis barren all, and waste,
The case is hopeless quite.

L I F E.

“CAUSA LATET, VIS EST NOTISSIMA.”

NOUGHT of this subtle principle
Is known, but its effects ;
Who seeks it in its *citadel*
Destroys—but not detects.

This lamp, that lightens all that lives,
Like *some*¹⁹ that guard the dead,
E'en by th' intruder's entrance is
To utter darkness sped !

“ NE CITO DECRESCAT TUA CRESCENS LUNA, CAVETO
BARBARE, SOLA POTEST CRUX SUPERARE CRUCEM.”

GRÆCIÆ MALEDICTIO.

THOUGH still in dense Egyptian darkness bound,
Still Turk to brother Turk is faithful found ;
No *turban'd* knave, to foreign fort or foss
Deserting, changed the crescent for the cross :
This depth of crime, with *double* treason fraught,
The Turk believed not, till the Christian wrought,
When to the *stagger'd* Saracen he sold
Faith, freedom, honour, and himself, for gold.

But hark, in depth and eloquence of woe,
From widow'd Greece these maledictions flow :

“ Your doing done,—your murderous mission
 sped,

Hide, recreants! hide from earth your hated
 head!

If homeward-bound, may Freedom's funeral knell
Rouse the deaf surge, the slumbering whirlwind
 swell;

And, oh! should not avenging Heaven direct
All seas to 'whelm you, may all shores reject,
Till every sun and soil repulse your band
With scorpion scourge from their polluted land!

“ May all men curse you!—and the mother's
 knee

Still teach the curse to those that are to be!
Your very sons will spurn that sire's embrace
That stamp'd the *mark of Cain* upon their race:

Though tears may scald their cheeks, and blushes
burn,
They'll meet with bitter scorn your loathed
return,
And hoot you back to your barbarian clan ;
Base renegadoes both of God and man !

“ But, oh ! some little space, if but to give
Full scope to general indignation,—live !
Then change your present for your future hell,
And fall—as your precursor Judas fell !

“ Oh, lost to honour ! and, oh, dead to shame !
Alive to nought, but damning deathless fame !
Oh, may the memory of your monstrous crime
Spread through all space, and occupy all time ;
On earth forgotten ne'er, and ne'er forgiven ;
Revenged in hell, and register'd in heaven.

“ May Truth, inspired by Byron’s glowing page,
 Transmit your nauseous name from age to age,
 In that *strong infamy embalm’d*, that dooms
 To rot for ever—what it ne’er consumes;
 And let one line ten thousand satires speak,
 The *Turk* was this man’s *friend*, his *foe* the
Greek!”

Thus spake A FORM! that from Colonna’s height
 Indignant plunged, and loathing spurn’d the light.

POLEMICS.

POLEMICS with Religion play,
 As truant children cast
 From hand to hand the flying ball,
 But to be lost²⁰ at last.

LORD BACON.

“QUI GENUS HUMANUM INGENIO SUPERAVIT, ET OMNES
PRÆSTINXIT STELLAS, EXORTUS UTI ÆTHEREUS SOL!”

WHILE others toil t' o'ertake celebrity,
But toil in vain, she pants to follow thee,
Yet lags outstripp'd behind: thy deeds afford
No time to praise,—their praise is to record:
Thine intellectual eye its lightnings hurl'd,
And pierced the darkness that involved the world;
Through all the realms of mind and matter
 stray'd,
But nothing greater than itself survey'd;
While Time, astounded, saw thy magic page
Advance mankind whole cent'ries in an age!
And to some error in his dates assign'd,
Or thee too much before, or them too far behind.

Some mountain thus salutes the virgin ray,
Fresh from the sun, fair herald of the day;
Views from his lofty summit, clothed with light,
The vale where linger still the shades of night.
Forgotten half, and half unknown to fame,
Thy title follows—not precedes, thy name;
And, like some gilded valet, apes in vain
His master's native dignity of mien.

Till thy fam'd star arose, the schoolmen wrought
At vast expense of every thing but thought;
Their tedious taskwork each revolving sun
Beheld beginning still, but ne'er begun:
Such time was squander'd in adapting rules,
Adjusting instruments, and naming tools,
That, storeless, pow'rless, fritter'd down to chips,
Discovery lay, and rotted on the slips;
No skill to launch her, and no master-hand
To rule her rudder, and her course command,

She stood—till thy proud spirit walk'd her deck,
In wisdom's way, a vast encumbering wreck?

Cramp'd by the Stagyrte, whose sons elect,
Though domineering still, could nought direct,
PHILOSOPHY, on vague conjecture tost,
Or metaphysic's misty mazes lost,
'Mid subtleties and nice distinctions pined,
And definitions ne'er to be defined!
At length, through cloister shade and convent
gloom,
Through wrangling hall, and lore-begirted dome,
A VOICE was heard! SHE woke as from the dead,
And shook the dust of ages from her head;
Woke as a giant, when refresh'd with wine,
To do THY bidding,—for THAT voice was THINE!
Freed from the schoolmen's folios by thy pen,
She quits her cobweb's cage, and dwells with
men;

Looks, for a moment, backward to the night
From which she merged, then forward to the
light!

And leaves (her childhood past) to bearded boys
And pedantry her Greek and Roman toys.

Train'd by thy Dædal hand, o'er earth and skies,
On firmer wing than Icarus she flies;
Still more to strengthen what she found aright,
She brings the laws that made it so to light,
And Cacus error, from his cavern strong,
Drags into day, and thus corrects the wrong.
Protecting all, by all protected, free,
And giving freedom, still she bows to THEE,
Grateful for all she is, and MORE she hopes to be!

“AN TIBI VIRTUS
VENTOSA IN LINGUA?”

7
WHO vainly strive on fulsome breath
Of their own praise to rise,
The higher they *themselves* exalt,
We but the more despise.

The lark that strains his little wing
Doth but the less appear,
And tops the zenith of his flight,
But to be lost in air!

FRIENDSHIP AND INGRATITUDE.

AN ALLEGORY.

INGRATITUDE, by Friendship's fostering hands
Planted and rear'd, her shadowy boughs expands,
But boughs with blossoms cluster'd, not with fruits;
And, as to heaven her head aspiring shoots,
To Tart'rus nearer still descend her grovelling
 roots.

But, lo, the storm! its fury Friendship shuns,
And to the towering trunk she fostered runs:
That treacherous tree her very *height* applies
To lure the livid lightning from the skies,
And lifeless at her foot the hand that rear'd her
 lies.

TINNIT—INANE EST!

THY bark, a coffin; helmsman, death;
A narrow shroud, the sail;
Thy freight, corruption; and the breath
Of parting life the gale :

This makes all sense and sight disclose
Contemptible and mean ;
But Faith, like Ocean, riches knows,
Exhaustless, but *unseen*.

And, as that ocean wild, the moon
With silver sceptre guides,
And, tranquil on her distant throne,
Controls the raging tides ;

So Faith, from her celestial height,
 Consoles the troubled breast,
And calm, from consciousness of might,
 Rebellion awes to rest.

REVENGE.

REVENGE to his dread purpose flies,
 But faster flies Remorse ;
As the fell tigress, of her whelps
 Bereft, o'ertakes the horse :

Remorse ! that on Revenge attends,
 To accuse, not curb the hand,
And bring us, while on earth, the vain
 Repentance of the damn'd.

“DUM TENER IN CUNIS JAM JOVE DIGNUS ERAT.”

THAT promise autumn pays that spring began,
And what the schoolboy was, such is the man:
The sap and tender bud in childhood shoot,
And youth the blossom gives—but age the fruit.

A WORD TO THE WISE.

“NUGIS ADDERE PONDUS.”

VAIN is thy labour, to create
From all that little is, the great:
Reverse it,—turn the great to little,
’T will suit thy genius to a tittle.

NOTES
TO
THE MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

*Note*¹, page 67.

“O thou, that bidd’st the brightest close
Their intellectual eye,
And to thy dizzy, dangerous height,
Like hooded falcons, fly.”

If the falcon escapes with his hood on, he soars perpendicularly upwards, until he drops; a circumstance common to all birds that are blinded, if they have the power and liberty to fly.

*Note*², page 79.

“Who now shall wake that widowed lyre?
There breathes but *one*, that dares
To that Herculean task aspire.”

The author is not aware whether the *one* here alluded to, be dead or alive.

*Note*³, page 80.

“Twere all in vain:—that charmed link
 That *hearts* in concord held,
 Was not of steel, but adamant,
 And, broken, will not *weld*!

Platina and iron are the only metals that will *weld*.

*Note*⁴, page 83.

“ Hunt rose to expound with what violence he,
 And stoical struggle, abandon'd his tea:
 An abandonment truly both safe and in season,
 For Treason, if T be omitted, is reason.”

This trifle had the honour of being taken to the House of Peers by Lord Erskine, and was afterwards sent by a friend of mine to a little periodical, entitled “The Gleaner.”

Note 5, page 94.

“When *nations* celebrate their rights
Should storm or cloud arise,
Behold a judgment, cry the priests,
And vengeance from the skies.”

The dreadful earthquake at the Caraccas took place on the anniversary of the birth of their independence, when the whole population was assembled in the churches, it being an high festival. This, of course, was construed into a judgment of Providence by a certain party, and its absurdity forces on us a not unprofitable remark on judgments in general; namely, that, when any evils befall us, it is not unwise to examine our own conduct, and to consider such calamities as judgments, when they happen to *ourselves*: but it is both unwise and uncharitable to put the same construction on those misfortunes that happen to another.

Note ⁶, page 98.

“ And, like those book-devouring flames
That Alexandria's tale proclaims,
‘ Are blessings in disguise.’ ”

In setting out on his voyage, Mr. Locke strongly recommends the young novice of science to begin by throwing all the useless lumber overboard. Had the Alexandrian library escaped the flames, the whole crew must have been converted into lumber-men, before the vessel could have been cleared for her voyage. What a cloud of commentators, and what hosts of critics, would have been entailed upon us, had these overwhelming relics of earlier prolixity descended unto us! Those lucubrations that, applied to the baths, kept the Alexandrians in *hot water* for some months, might have performed the same *kind office* for the whole world for as many ages, had not the expurgatory decree of the Caliph forbidden such a misfortune. Our eyes are perhaps the first of our senses that begin to fail us; and it has sometimes struck me that this is a gentle hint that there is a period when we should cease to pore over the works of others, and begin to examine our

own, and to cease from reading, that reflection may begin. In ascertaining the real value of any thing, we of course ask two questions,—what is the difficulty of acquiring it? and what is its utility, when acquired? In order to be an object worthy of our pursuit, the answer to each query must be in the affirmative; for many things, like rope-dancing and fiddling, may be very difficult, but not very useful; and many other things may be useful, but not difficult. A short rule to get at the true value of any science is this: ask yourself, candidly, what is there of real value that any one who is master of such a science can perform, that you cannot? Some sciences would answer the querist triumphantly,—as algebra, astronomy, mathematics, chemistry, &c.; others, whose titles are somewhat pompous, would here be mute. What is there, for instance, that a logician, or a metaphysician, or a craniologist can perform by aid of their science, that others cannot effect as well, or better, without it?

Note 7, page 99.

“ Time’s telescope more wonderful appears
E’en than his scythe, and deeper truths conveys :
His tube prospective lengthens days to years ;
Reversed, our years it shortens into days !”

I have elsewhere observed, that one reason why time past appears so very much diminished, compared with time that is to come, is this : when we look back into time past, we must of necessity fix our attention upon some particular period. Now, with all the circumstances connected with this period we are pretty well acquainted, because they have taken place : this therefore is a luminous point. But when we look forward into time to come, the case is different : all is darkness and obscurity. In this instance, therefore, the mind is deceived by her own position, as much as he would be, who, stationed in the middle of a dark vista, was called upon to decide on the comparative distance of each end, one having a lamp at its termination, and the other none.

Note ⁸, page 100.

“ Such odour from that holocaust
In fragrant incense rose,
That Truth a deathless vigour gain'd,
That half redeem'd her foes.”

Martyrs prove nothing but their own sincerity. Those who threw themselves under the wheels of Jaggernaut must be discharged from the imputation of knavery, but by no means from that of folly. It is so much more easy to die for religion than to live for it, that all sects, however absurd, have had their martyrs. To entitle martyrdom to its full share of our admiration and gratitude, two things are necessary: that the religion for which the martyr dies should, from its purity in precept, bear within itself the stamp of having proceeded from the deepest wisdom; and, from its utility in practice, carry outward evidence that it was the result of the highest goodness. The Christian's scheme in both these points is perfect.

Note 9, page 101.

“ Unmatch'd in power, unbounded in extent,
As omnipresent as omnipotent,
To no meridian nor clime confined,
Man with his fellow man, and mind to mind,
'Tis hers, in links of love and charity, to bind.”

We ought to pray as those do that expect every thing from God, and act as those do that expect every thing from themselves. Farthermore, we are borne out by various passages in Scripture, in attributing a very high degree of efficacy to the prayers of the living for the living: it is a labour of love, that may be of service to others, does improve ourselves, and must be acceptable to our MAKER. Prayer it is that gives universality to benevolence, enabling Christians, who have never seen one another, or who have been divided by distance, or kept asunder by danger, to become spiritually united for each other's good, in a moment and at will, by the awful communion of prayer.

*Note*¹⁰, page 108.

“And yet, to have no faith demands
More faith than is supposed,
For sceptics have their creed—of things
Incredible composed.”

It has often struck me, that a work might be written on a principle that scepticism of every grade, either partial or universal, would find it difficult to confute. As the keystone of such a work, one position might be insisted on, which the most confirmed Pyrrhonist could not but admit; and which, being admitted, would involve consequences from which he could not escape. The position I allude to is neither more nor less than this, THE POSSIBILITY OF A FUTURE STATE OF RETRIBUTION. Now this happens to be a most awful possibility: first, because it is impossible to deny it; secondly, because it embraces such tremendous responsibilities. More fully to understand the nature of these responsibilities, the author of the work contemplated would do well to dedicate some of his lucubrations to an examination of the real value of any good, and the true estimate of any evil, attached to this present life. From

such an examination it would distinctly appear, that no wise man is warranted in allowing his eternal interests to be put in jeopardy, even by the possibility of a future state; because, as compared to *such a bare possibility*, all the goods and evils of the present life become an evanescent point, and sink into nothingness. This truth might be submitted to the rigid test of the strictest calculation, and would be still more confirmed by so severe an ordeal. We might ask, for instance, how many seconds composed the life of a Parr or a Jenkins?—a task easily accomplished. But, if we ask a second question, we may wait long enough for the answer,—How many collective lives of such men as Parr and Jenkins would be requisite to make up an eternity?

We can answer the first question, because a second is an absolute and component part of the life of man; but we cannot answer the second, because the longest life of man is no component part of eternity. The longest life of man, as compared to eternity, is so trifling, that it becomes an evanescent point, a thing not to be taken into the calculation. What, then, are the consequences deducible from these facts? First, that the longest life of man bears a smaller proportion to eternity than a single second does to

the longest life of man ; and, secondly, that he is little short of a madman, who, to avoid any evil or gain any good here, puts himself within the possibility of injuring his eternal interests ; because he wounds these interests for the sake of a gratification, the duration of which bears a shorter proportion to eternity than a single second does to life.

*Note*¹¹, page 113.

“ Holding the key of Truth within his hand,
On Doubt, her vestibule, behold him stand,
And point, like Moses, to that brighter spot,
Pursued, explored, attain'd, but enter'd not.”

One reason why those minds endowed with the keenest acumen of observation, and the greatest vigour of thought, so often leave the subject of their speculations in a state of uncertainty most embarrassing to themselves, and most unsatisfactory to others, would seem to be this : ignorance lies at the bottom of all human knowledge, and the deeper we penetrate the nearer we arrive unto it. After certain points have been passed, and certain lines, as it were, of

demarcation penetrated, we invariably meet with certain obstacles which we cannot pass, and which seem to say to all efforts of human wisdom, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." Take any branch of science you please, and pursue the light it gives you to its very extremity, it will infallibly bring you at last to the point where the philosopher will be no wiser than the peasant; and the only difference is, that the ignorance of the one lies nearer the surface, whilst the want of knowledge in the other is found at the end of the labyrinth.

*Note*¹², page 116.

" Blame not the stars nor destinies,—
 In thine own hand the prowess lies;
 Thy map of life review:
 The march was plain, but thou, beguiled
 By some short cut, or prospect wild,
 Hast wandered from the true."

That every man is *more* or *less* the fabricator of his own fortune, is too obvious to be insisted on; but this may be worth observing, that the *more* applies to those who avail

themselves of *opportunity*, the *less* to those who do not. We have, however, two great authorities against us on this subject,—Shakspeare and Butler. The first observes :

“ There is a Providence that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.”

One would conceive it difficult to express this thought better; and yet Shakspeare has perhaps been surpassed by Butler, who, with his usual pregnant brevity, thus expresses himself :

“ For whatsoe'er we perpetrate,
We do but row,—we are steer'd by fate.”

Texts, however, of an *opposite* tendency might easily be cited from Shakspeare, who, in common with all good dramatists, assimilates the sentiments to the characters who utter them. But to return :—All who are about to enter on life should be most strongly recommended *never to neglect opportunity*. Opportunity has effected more than fortune, or even talent : she has often taken them both by the hand, and found eyes for the one, and ears for the other. Therefore, should Opportunity knock at your door, neglect her not ; and remember this, that, inasmuch as she

always makes the *first* advances, she is on that account particularly sensible of rebuff.

*Note*¹³, page 117.

“ Self-pride, of good and ill the source,
Still prompts again the tortuous course
Of error to begin ;
Blames, for the ruin and the rout
Of all our hopes, the foe without,
Not the false friend within.”

“ Stop, sir,” observed Napoleon to Barry O’Meara :
“ *you are mistaken ; I had no enemy but myself ; I have myself alone to blame, for all the disasters that happened unto me.*” This is the short history of most, who, having failed in their undertakings, waste that time in complaining of their misfortunes which were better occupied in correcting their mistakes. I believe there are very few that would choose to live their life over again ; but, allow them in their second existence to profit by the experience they had acquired in the first, then indeed there are very few that would refuse it. An actor on the mimic stage, preparatory

to his appearance before the public, is allowed a rehearsal ; but, in the eventful drama of real life, no rehearsal is allowed. Furthermore, we are called upon to please an audience remarkable for its predispositions *not to be pleased*, and at the precise season of life when we are least aware of the value of character, and least able to follow the dictates of prudence : this is the very time when we are expected to lay the foundation of the one, and practise all the precepts of the other !

*Note*¹⁴, page 122.

“ It is not of the heart, nor of the head,
But of THE INMOST SOUL, sustain'd and fed
By that ambrosial feast to Israel given,—
Gather'd on earth, but sent direct from heaven !”

The true poet must of necessity collect his images from earth ; but the inspiration that invigorates them with life, and enriches them with beauty, like the fabled fire that animated the Promethean clay, is not of earth, but of heaven.

*Note*¹⁵, page 125.

“ O thou, for ever doomed to prove
The comrade and the curse of love,—
The bravest thou canst force to yield,
And pierce them through their very shield.”

Seeing that Jealousy inflicts her wounds through that self-pride which is our shield on all other occasions, it strikes one as somewhat remarkable that Frenchmen, a race by no means deficient in honour, sensibility, and high feeling, very rarely resort to atrocious or desperate remedies under the influence of this gloomy passion. Perhaps the solution of the difficulty is this: their vanity heals the wounds inflicted on their pride, and, instead of revenging themselves on the fair inconstant, they content themselves by pitying the bad taste she has evinced, in abandoning one so worthy of admiration; and they finish the matter, not by destroying their former idol, but by seeking another, whose discernment shall enable her not only to select such merit, but also to preserve it.

*Note*¹⁶, page 127.

“ The throbbing heart, the quivering lip,
That shook a Marlborough's frame,
Were but the throes,--the giant birth
Was Blenheim's deathless name !”

It is a well-known fact, that the Duke of Marlborough was always greatly agitated on going into action: he used to say, “ This little body trembles at what this great soul is about to perform.”

*Note*¹⁷, page 140.

“ Thus, throned on rocks, Missouri takes
His giant leap, and thundering shakes
The depth of woods below !
His lone magnificence displays,
Where not an eye the pomp surveys
But His that bade him flow.”

The cataract of the Missouri is very rarely seen, except by such enterprising travellers as Humboldt or Clarke. I have been informed that this cataract is the grandest in the world: that of Niagara did not quite equal my expectations,—it struck me as being *minor famâ*.

*Note*¹⁸, page 141.

“ The faults, alas! or follies of a friend,
We catch and copy, though we can't commend;
As to his virtues, if *these* e'er create
A rival effort, 'tis constrain'd or late:
These we commend indeed, but seldom imitate.”

In confirmation of the above position, it may be remarked, that large cities, camps, manufactories, or any other establishment, whereby large masses of population are concentrated on any particular spot, have invariably demoralised society, rather than ameliorated it. The reason is this, bad habits are more rapidly communicated than those that are good. But some will farther ask, why should they be more rapidly communicated? We would reply, that vicious courses always proffer some trivial but immediate gratification or enjoyment; but those that are virtuous are followed up with difficulty, and rewarded late:—temptation pays in ready money, but self-denial draws a bill. As far as the body is concerned, the parallel is equally true, and almost as deplorable; for, although health is constantly catching disease from another's sickness, yet sickness never yet caught sanity from another's health.

*Note*¹⁹, page 143.

“ This lamp that lightens all that lives,
 Like *some* that guard the dead,
 E'en by th' intruder's entrance is
 To utter darkness sped !”

Rosicrucian lamps.

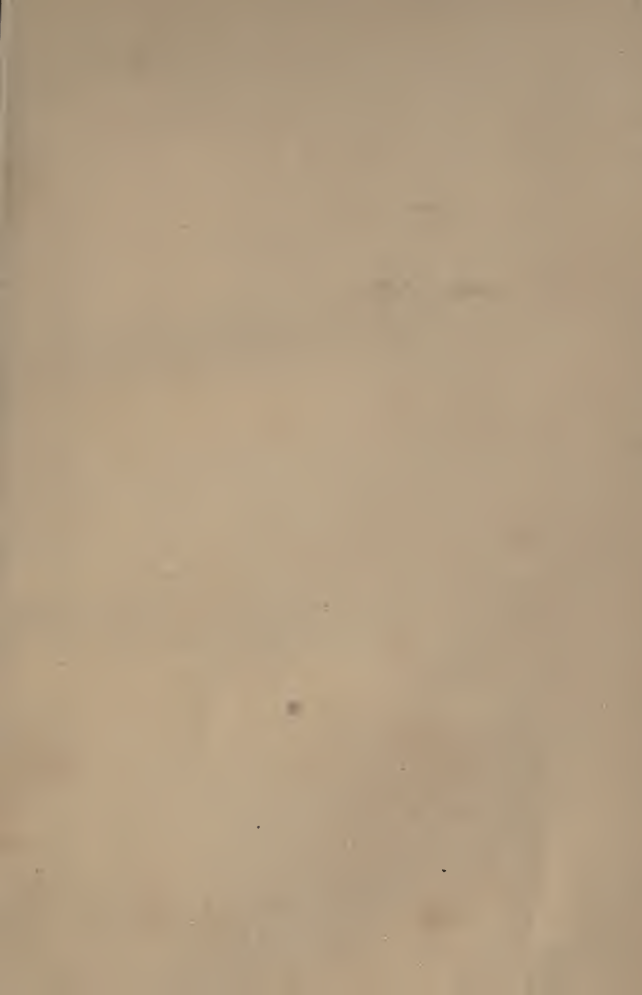
*Note*²⁰, page 147.

“ Polemics with Religion play,
 As truant children cast
 From hand to hand the flying ball,
 But to be lost at last.”

This can only happen when controversy is carried on with that degree of acrimony and bitterness, that it induces the destruction of the brightest part of that which we combat to defend. But most evils have their concomitant good : religion at present is in more danger from indifference than persecution,—from the supineness of the calm, rather than the devastation of the hurricane. Minds that are

energetic in-opposition are too often torpid in acquiescence, and souls that dose in harmony are alert in discord. In this particular they may be compared to that Turkish envoy, who, on his appearance at the Opera, astonished the Parisians by bestowing all his applause and animation on the din produced by the tuning of the instruments, but was observed to be fast asleep the moment the concert began.

THE END.





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